"THE WORLD CRISIS" AS HISTORY

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The 29th. Division commenced sailing from England on March 16th. The original intention had been that it should travel to Lemnos and from there be disembarked on the Gallipoli Peninsula or at Constantinople as required. However, Wemyss, who had arrived at Lemnos on February 24th. as Governor, soon found that the island had severe limitations as a base. He told the Admiralty that "the island is not capable of supplying either provisions or water for any large number of men....There are no buildings which can be made use of as Barracks... The troops will therefore have to live on board the transports." After Hamilton had seen Lemnos for himself he decided to transfer the main base to Alexandria and to send the 29th. Division directly there. Kitchener protested at the delay that this would cause but Hamilton explained to him that "on the thoroughness with which I can make the preliminary arrangements, of which the proper allocation of troops, etc. to transports is not the least important, the success of my plans will largely depend. This is one of the principal reasons why I attach importance to the thorough organization of the expedition at a convenient base like Alexandria."  

When the 29th. Division arrived at Alexandria it was found that it had been loaded onto the transports in a way which made landing on open beaches impossible. All the ships therefore had to be unpacked and resorted. Much has been made of the delay which this process caused. The Dardanelles Commissioners became obsessed with the question and spent a large proportion of their time in trying to assign responsibility for the incorrect loading. The broad outline of what happened, however, is quite simple. In March, when the transports were being packed, the

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(1) Wemyss, The Navy in the Dardanelles Campaign, p. 18-19. In an episode that seemed to characterize the whole expedition, Wemyss and his party booked their first class passages to the east with Thomas Cook - Miller Papers, Imperial War Museum, London, PP/MCR/16.  
(2) Wemyss to the Admiralty 26/2/15, Adm.137/1089.  
(3) Hamilton to Kitchener 18/3/15, Adm.137/110.  
(5) Hamilton to Kitchener 23/3/15, in Ibid.
responsible War Office and Admiralty authorities in England knew of no plan to land the 29th. Division on open beaches. In fact, at that stage, there was no plan. The naval attack was proceeding and it was thought likely that the army would only be required for "a cruise in the Sea of Marmora", to use Kitchener's phrase. Therefore the 29th. Division was not tactically loaded onto the transports. Even had it been known, that such a landing was contemplated it is doubtful if much could have been accomplished without a detailed plan. As Braithwaite (C.O.S. to Hamilton) said

"I do not think anybody could stow the ships properly, except the people who knew how the men were going to be taken off the ships....We took the different beaches, and saw how many men we could get on to them, and from that we worked it backwards on to boats, on to the lighters, on to the ships, and into the holds."1

In other words, the transports could only be properly stowed after Hamilton's plan had been formulated in detail. In the circumstances then, delay was inevitable and no blame should be attached to the authorities in England who did the best they could given the uncertain state of the whole operation. Moreover, it is doubtful if the landing could have taken place any earlier even had the transports been tactically loaded. Corbett has pointed out that a great deal of naval preparation was involved in the landing. The flotilla of small craft needed had to be collected and he is convinced that the final naval arrangements "could not be done in less time than the army would require for its own preparations".2

This debate over the delays in landing the division raises a related question over the delay in its despatch from England. Had the 29th. Division been sent earlier (that is when Kitchener first decided to release it on February 16th.) could it have landed on the Peninsula in mid-March? The crucial factor was the weather. It has been shown that in

(1) Dardanelles Commission, Braithwaite's Evidence 25/1/17, Q13,250, Cab. 19/33.
(2) Corbett, Naval Operations V.2, p. 291.
February and early March bad weather often delayed the naval operations. From mid-March to the end of the month there were only two or three days of calm weather and there was a gale from April 2nd. to the 6th. There seems to have been a period of quieter weather between April 13th. and 19th. but then the wind picked up and only eventually moderated on the eve of April 24th. Whether the navy would have agreed to land the army in these uncertain conditions is conjectural, as is the question of whether the army could have been sustained on the Peninsula during long periods of bad weather. Birdwood, who had been eager to land in early April came to the conclusion that it was fortunate that the landing had been delayed because of the periods of bad weather that followed. Of course there is no reason to suppose that the 29th. Division's transports would have been packed any differently in mid-February than mid-March and it seems inevitable that there would have been at least a fortnight delay in repacking them. This would have meant the earliest that the army could have landed was in early April, which was the very period thought unsuitable by Birdwood. Obviously in discussing a question of this kind no final conclusion can be reached but it is clearly imprudent to assume that the only fact affecting the landing of the 29th. Division was its date of despatch from England.

A complementary question is how much the Turkish defences were strengthened between mid-March and April 25th. It is usually stated that the appointment of Liman von Sanders to the command of the Turkish 5th. Army on March 24th. was the crucial factor and that the measures undertaken on his instructions were responsible for the establishment of an adequate defence. No doubt Liman brought new energy to the defence but the major landing places had been trenched and wired well before he took

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(2) Ibid.
(3) Birdwood to his wife 15/5/15, Birdwood Papers, A.W.M. file 419/10/7, Box 210.
up his command, and this factor alone meant that any landing in March would have been a considerable undertaking.

Consideration now has to be given to the task facing Hamilton and his response to it. At his disposal was the Anzac Corps, the R.N. Division, a French Division and the 29th. Division, a total of nearly 70,000 men. Of these only the 29th. and the French Division were regulars and even the French were a scratch formation "hurriedly assembled by combing the depots of France and North Africa". It was estimated that to oppose this force the Turks had available 40,000 men on the Peninsula and 30,000 nearby in reserve. Other estimates of the number on Gallipoli ranged from 34,000 to 50,000. In fact it is now known that these estimates were quite accurate and that there were 84,000 men on Gallipoli or in the near vicinity. However it was realized by the British that the Turkish Army had a strength of at least 22 divisions, many of which would be available to reinforce the Gallipoli garrison during a protracted struggle. The essence of success then, was a quick victory.

No consideration was ever given by Hamilton, or Kitchener, or the War Council to the question of whether such a victory could be obtained with 70,000 men. The size of the force was dictated by what was considered surplus to the needs of the Army in France rather than what was necessary to do the job. Hamilton always remained confident of success in spite of the fact that two of his divisional commanders, Paris and the "usually dangerously optimistic" Hunter-Weston thought the task too formidable. Hunter-Weston concluded that to abandon the operation at this stage "will need great strength and moral courage on the part of the Commander

(1) See General Staff War Diary 18/3/15, W.O. 95/4263.
(2) "The French Official Account of The Dardanelles" (Translation of selected sections) Army Quarterly, V.17, 1928-9, p. 256.
(3) Hamilton to Kitchener 23/3/15, G.H.Q. War Diary, W.O. 95/4264.
(6) Turkish Short History, p. 14.
(7) 29th. Division War Diary 20/4/15, W.O. 95/4304.
(8) Hamilton to Kitchener 30/3/15, Hamilton Papers, 5/1.
and Government”. However Hamilton probably thought that in the light of Kitchener's directive he had little choice but to attempt a landing. His sanguine temperament no doubt made the task of converting this necessity into a virtue relatively easy.

Did an underestimation of the fighting capabilities of the Turks play a part in the rather casual approach of the military and political authorities to the decision to land troops? The immediate Commanders of the troops which were about to carry out the operation were under no illusions. Birdwood feared "it must be a longish business before we succeed completely". Similar sentiments were expressed by Braithwaite. As usual, however, Hamilton was more confident. He later told the Dardanelles Commission that "I did not know...that [the Turks]...were nearly as good as they turned out to be", and after the war he said, "I could hardly think that Great Britain and France would not in the long run defeat Turkey". He apparently never asked himself the question, could Britain and France defeat Turkey with the resources they were willing to commit, which was the real crux of the matter. In London Churchill was as optimistic as Hamilton. We have already noted the reassurances which he gave the War Council and Balfour on the landing. In this period he also passed on to Grey, Kitchener and Asquith a letter from a "trusted" source claiming that the Turkish Government was splitting into factions, that there were open disagreements between German officers and Turkish troops, and that the Turkish munition supply was failing. Others were not convinced by Churchill. Hankey pointed out to Asquith that the success of the whole operation seemed to be based on the "supposed shortages of supplies and inferior fighting qualities of the Turkish armies".

(1) Hunter - Weston's Appreciation.
(2) Birdwood to Callwell 10/4/15, Birdwood Papers, AWM File 419/10/7, Box 214.
(3) Braithwaite to Fitzgerald 10/4/15, Kitchener Papers, Pro 30/57/61.
(4) Dardanelles Commission, Hamilton's Evidence 9/1/17, Q7666, Cab. 19/33.
(6) Document from a Mr. Cauñides, Corfu, Adm. 116/1336.
(7) Hankey to Asquith 12/4/15, Hankey Papers, Cab. 63/5.
propositions he thought extremely doubtful. Kitchener's frequently expressed opinion that the Turks would surrender if the Fleet got through would seem to indicate that he had a low opinion of Turkish morale. A few days before the landing, however, he sent an intelligence report to Hamilton which said that the Turkish troops fighting in Mesopotamia had shown good discipline and determination. Perhaps he was trying to ensure that Hamilton was not taking the operation too easily. Thus opinion was divided but Hamilton and Churchill were certainly confident of a speedy victory.

Hamilton, having made the assumption that a landing and subsequent victory were possible, set about deciding where to land. Birdwood's first thoughts had been directed towards Cape Hellas, but he later came to the conclusion that the Peninsula was too restricted to manoeuvre and he advised landing on the Asiatic coast. However, this area of operations had been forbidden to Hamilton by Kitchener. In any case it offered few prospects of success. The best landing places on the Asiatic coast were 25 miles from the Narrows and Chanak, the country was rough with many rivers to cross, and there was the problem of advancing with an open right flank. Moreover, Hamilton's Staff favoured a landing on the Peninsula. Hellas was thought most suitable because of the assistance which could be given by the Fleet. A second point on the Peninsula, near Gaba Tepe was chosen because of its proximity to the Narrows. A force landed there could also assist the southern army by cutting off the Turks south of Maidos from their base. Indeed this was the plan that was eventually adopted, the 29th. Division and the French landing at Hellas and the Anzacs north of Gaba Tepe. It has been

(1) G.H.Q. War Diary 19/4/15, W.O. 95/4263.
(2) Birdwood to Kitchener 10/3/15, Kitchener Papers, Pro 30/57/61.
(3) Birdwood to Kitchener 6/4/15, in Ibid.
(5) Braithwaite's Appreciation, 23/3/15, Hamilton Papers, 17/5/2; Aspinall's Appreciation, 3/3/15, Hamilton Papers, 17/5/2.
suggested, however, that Hellas was a poor choice. It was much further from the Narrows than Gaba Tepe. The only landing places were very narrow, (the three chosen had a frontage of 900 yards) and would inhibit rapid deployment of the force, so necessary for success. Hamilton also knew at the time that they were heavily defended with a "complete system of trenches and entanglements, supported by guns in concealed positions". He was also aware that naval gunfire in the amount available was ineffective against wire and trenches. Thus Hellas was a distinctly uninviting location. What were Hamilton's other options? Bulair was ruled out from the beginning. Although the Peninsula was at its narrowest at this point (3½ miles) it was 30 miles from the Narrows over difficult ground. The landing places were heavily defended and commanded by artillery. However, some authorities have held that Hamilton should have landed his entire force at Gaba Tepe, the Anzacs to the north of the promontory, the remainder to the south. The beaches were good in this area and the main forts only a few miles away. At the time Hamilton rejected this option because of the visible beach defences. There was also no sheltered anchorage in the near vicinity and most of the beaches were commanded by batteries on Kilid Bahr. After the war, in a note on Miles' account Hamilton changed his mind and stated that a landing would have been possible. Aspinall, on the other hand, thought a landing there would have "been a bigger massacre than V Beach!" But then Aspinall helped draw up the original plan.

Whether a landing at Gaba Tepe would have prospered more than the Hellas as assault is a matter for speculation. On the one hand the whole force would have been within striking distance of the Narrows and

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(2) Hamilton to Kitchener 18/4/15, G.H.Q. War Diary, W.O. 95/4264.
(6) Ibid.
(7) Aspinall to Keyes, 25/8/? , Keyes Papers, 5/41.
the country facing it would have been much easier than Anzac or even Hellas. On the other hand the route across the neck of the Peninsula was dominated by high ground on either side and could have been brought under constant artillery fire. A force advancing on Maidos could also have been attacked from the north and south and it is doubtful if Hamilton's force, even united, was strong enough to throw out defensive flanks, attack the Turks and capture the forts. The inescapable fact is that wherever Hamilton landed, his force was not adequate for the task in hand.

In fact the choices facing Hamilton and the sufficiency of his army were never considered by the political authorities in London and in the interval between the naval failure and the military landing the War Council ceased to function. No formal meeting of that body was held between March 18th and April 25th. The feasibility of the coming operation was therefore never discussed and no formal sanction was ever given to Hamilton's plan. To the Cabinet the decision was presented as a fait accompli, a procedure which prompted McKenna to observe that in these circumstances the Cabinet could not be held responsible if the operation failed.\(^1\) Churchill immediately replied that he was quite prepared to take the whole responsibility himself.\(^2\)

As Hamilton finalized his plans, Fisher's doubts about the operation surfaced once more. Previously, as has been observed, Fisher based his opposition to naval involvement at the Dardanelles on the ground that it weakened the Grand Fleet. However, during February and March he had pushed for troops to be sent to the east to convert the attack into a combined operation. Now, his opinion began to change and harden against the operation as a whole. He affected to believe that Germany was about to

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\(^1\) Hobhouse Diary 7/4/15, quoted in David Edward (Ed.) Inside Asquith's Cabinet, p. 254.

\(^2\) Ibid.
invade Holland and on those grounds called for the return of the Queen Elizabeth, the Inflexible and some of the destroyers and submarines.\footnote{Fisher to Churchill 27/3/15, Churchill Papers 8/177.} He also suggested that, before a final decision was made to land troops, Hamilton should be asked if he thought the operation possible and if the War Office agreed with this assessment.\footnote{Memorandum by Fisher 27/3/15, C.V.3, p. 754-5.} Fisher was concerned that fundamental questions were not being asked, "What is Ian Hamilton's report as to probable success?...Is the capture of the Gallipoli Peninsula going to be a success?...Is Ian Hamilton assured of the sufficiency of his force?"\footnote{Fisher to Churchill 28/3/15, C.V.3, p. 757-8.} In a further letter Fisher argued that these matters should be discussed by the War Council "before the final plunge is taken,"\footnote{Fisher to Churchill 31/3/15 in Marder A.J., Fear God V.3, p. 177-9.} and he forwarded a memorandum to Churchill on the subject, which he urged him to place before the Council "in order that immediate deliberation may take place".\footnote{Memorandum by Fisher 31/3/15 in Ibid., p. 179-81.} These were important documents. Fisher's position was that the War Council had been committed to a combined operation by Hamilton and de Robeck. He felt unable to rely on their judgement\footnote{Fisher to Jellicoe 4/4/15, Jellicoe Papers, Add/Mss. 49007.} and considered that the War Council should make up its own mind after an independent survey of all the facts. However, as far as Churchill was concerned, the matter had been decided. A landing would have to be made. There was no need for further discussion. He therefore refused to accede to Fisher's request for a special meeting of the War Council. Nor did he circulate any of Fisher's papers to his colleagues. The chance for a reappraisal of the operation was thus lost.

On April 7th. the Junior Sea Lords (Hamilton, Tudor and Lambert) presented a memorandum to Fisher on the conduct of the naval war. They wished to be reassured that extraneous operations such as the Dardanelles were not endangering the superiority of the Grand Fleet and that naval
strategy was still being decided by the First Sea Lord. Here, it might be thought, was a chance for Fisher to form a united front against Churchill and demand that he take some action on Fisher's papers questioning the Dardanelles strategy. It seems certain, however, that this option was not considered by the First Sea Lord. He was of the firm opinion that the Junior Sea Lords should not be involved in matters of strategy and it was he who had removed the Second Sea Lord from the Admiralty War Group. He merely wrote the Sea Lords a mildly worded reply, assuring them that the Grand Fleet was safe but stating that no more material of any kind could be sent to de Robeck.

A clearer indication of Fisher's position is contained in a memorandum which he wrote for Churchill later on April 7th. He argued that as Italy was about to join the Allies, the Dardanelles attack should be postponed until after that country had definitely come in, as failure might prejudice her conduct. He considered it might be preferable to attack elsewhere (Haifa) where the risks were less and success "assured". This is another indication that Fisher was not only opposed to the naval attack but that he also thought the military landing had few prospects of success. However, Churchill would not hear of an alternative strategy. Indeed he had been furious with Richmond, the originator of Fisher's scheme, for submitting his paper in the first place. Thus ended Fisher's last attempt to stop the Dardanelles operation. From this point his communications to Churchill on the subject became less frequent and although he remained pessimistic, all he could do, as he told Jellicoe, was to hope that the defenders made "a mess of it".

Originally scheduled for April 23rd, the military landing was delayed.

(5) Fisher to Jellicoe 22/4/15, Jellicoe Papers, Add/Mss. 49007.
by the weather until the 25th. In the south the 29th. Division was
to land at the foot of the Peninsula while the French created a diversion
at Kum Kale, from where they would later be evacuated and join the main
advance inland. In the north the Anzacs would land north of Gaba Tepe
while the R.N.D. feinted a landing at Bulair.

At Hellas a covering force of 6,000 men was to land at five beaches,
followed by the main body when the landing places were secure. The three
main landings were to take place at the foot of the Peninsula at beaches
V, W and X. These troops were immediately to advance up the Peninsula
and link up with the flank landings at Y and S, whereupon the whole force
would move on Achi Baba, a ridge dominating the southern end of the
Peninsula.

The landings were covered by a naval bombardment which in the event
was a considerable failure. Visibility was poor, the airspotting arrange-
ments broke down, the number of shells used had to be limited, and in
any case it was known that the armour piercing shells used by the navy
were ineffective against wire entanglements and trenches. There were
local difficulties. Because of a change in orders, only one ship covered
the major landing at V beach and for the entire day this ship (Albion)
fired only 12 shells from its main armament.

If Hamilton's plan was to work, quick successes were needed at V,
W and X. But at V and W the landing places formed amphitheatres which
gave the Turkish defenders (only some 200 at each place) perfect shooting.
The men were shot down in heaps often before they had reached the beach.
The expedient of landing troops from a British collier (River Clyde) only
provided the Turks with a better target as the men issued from several

(2) Ibid.
(7) Note by Brig-Gen. Perceval on information given by C.O.S. 9th. Turkish
Division 6/5/19, Adm. 116/1713.
sally ports cut in the sides. It is hard to see why the massacres at V and W were not anticipated. The restricted nature of the beaches could clearly be seen from the sea and Hamilton was aware that ship's fire could not destroy the trenches and wire. Yet it was here that he chose to land the bulk of the covering force whose success was vital to the whole operation.

Ironically, on the flanks, where the landings did succeed, the troops had no orders to advance independently across the Peninsula or to intervene if the southern landings were held up. Their leaders had no knowledge of the number of Turks likely to be in their immediate area although the troops at Y alone outnumbered the entire Turkish force south of Achi Baba. The troops at Y and S, therefore, dug in according to orders and remained inactive for the whole day. 1 Y was evacuated on the 26th. after a heavy night attack, and S was eventually joined to the main body on the 27th.

An opportunity to convert the flank landings into something more important came on the 25th. when Hamilton suggested to the divisional commander, Hunter-Weston, that troops be diverted from V and W to Y. 2 Hunter-Weston refused on the grounds that this would disrupt the naval landing arrangements. 3 He continued to reinforce failure by sending additional men to V and W throughout the day and Hamilton declined to overrule him, reasoning that the man on the spot knew best. In fact, Hunter-Weston, offshore on the Euryalus, had little more local knowledge than Hamilton, and at the time Hamilton's request was made had not grasped that the situation at V was desperate.

Much has been made of the "lost opportunities" at Y and S. In retrospect they seem largely theoretical. To strike out into the unknown,

(2) G.H.Q. War Diary 25/4/15, entry for 9.21 a.m., in Ibid.
(3) Ibid., entry for 10.00 a.m.
against orders, could hardly be expected of junior officers in 1915. The higher command could have exploited the situation but this would have involved shifting the entire centre of gravity of the operation while it was in progress, a considerable undertaking given the primitive state of communications. The orders for the flank landings were undoubtedly too rigid and placed too much emphasis on awaiting events to the south. But it must be remembered that none of the personnel involved had any experience of amphibious landings and that to have allowed various landing parties the freedom to roam about over the southern end of the Peninsula might have meant loss of control over the whole affair, especially if the Turks had been present in force.

Another theoretical opportunity existed at X. Here the covering force and the main body had landed with few casualties. These troops also remained inactive for most of the day. Their commander could not commit them to the battle without divisional sanction as they consisted largely of the divisional reserve. But Hunter-Weston, still in Euryalus, was unaware of the success at X and the commander of the covering force, who might have coordinated their movements, was dead. When the Brigadier in local command at X went to see for himself the position at W, the neighbouring beach, he was wounded. Deprived of their senior officers, the men dug in on the edge of the beach and waited.

Thus at S, X and Y the troops were ashore and well established. At W the position gradually improved throughout the day and a foothold was secured. At V nightfall gave the survivors of the day the opportunity to scramble ashore though they were barely able to advance beyond the edge of the slope overlooking the beach.

From the 26th. to the 28th. various efforts were made to coordinate an advance inland. All ultimately failed. There seem to be two main

(1) 1st. Battalion, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers War Diary, 25/4/15, W.O. 95/4311.
(2) Aspinal-Oglander, Gallipoli V.1, p. 245.
factors involved in these failures. The most obvious was the exhaustion of the troops, who by the evening of the 26th. had been without sleep and proper food for 48 hours. Also, the most exhausted troops were usually found where the enemy’s resistance had been strongest but in the prevailing doctrine of the day it was at these points that new attacks had to be made. Thus on the 26th. while the weary survivors at V beach spent most of the day taking Sedd-el-Bahr village and the hill that overlooked it, virtually no fighting took place on the front of the fresher troops at X.

Fatigue was also a factor on the 27th. The troops on the right of the line (the survivors of W and V) were by then thought to be incapable of further effort. Before an advance could be made it was necessary to replace them with the relatively fresh French troops. But shortage of small craft and congestion on the beaches meant delay in landing the French and the advance did not begin until the afternoon. Thus although no Turkish opposition was experienced when this forward movement got underway, it was only possible to reach a line Gully Beach-S beach before nightfall.

From the 28th. onwards a new factor had to be taken into account. This was the increasing strength of the Turks in the area. On the 25th. the landing had been opposed by no more than 800 men with another 1,000 in local reserve. By April 27th. there were at least 6,000 Turks south of Achi Baba though few were in contact with the British. On April 28th. (the date of the First Battle of Krithia) this number had increased to between 8,000 and 10,000. The British and the French entered this battle with no more than 14,000 men, and thus did not possess the

(2) 87th. Infantry Brigade War Diary, W.O. 95/4311. The troops of the 87th. Brigade covering X beach remained in the same position on the 26th. as on the previous night. They had to await the capture of the high ground above V before advancing. As this was not taken until 4 p.m. on the 26th. their advance was postponed.
(3) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.1, p. 280-1.
(4) Ibid., p. 283.
(7) Ibid., Map 15.
(8) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.1, p. 294.
necessary superiority to ensure success. However, other factors on the British side make it doubtful if an advance could have been made, had only half the number of Turks been present. The troops on the left of the line were worn out, the strain of the last three days having finally taken its toll. In other sections of the line ammunition had begun to run out and to move supplies from the beach meant men had to be taken out of the firing line. The only reserves at hand were the exhausted 86th. brigade which had just been replaced by the French and although a small party of these men got within 3/4 mile of Krithia, the Turkish line was in no sense broken.

It has often been said that if a new division had been available to throw into the battle after the landings, a victory could have been obtained. This proposition, however, begs the important question of whether it would have been possible to land the additional division before corresponding Turkish reinforcements were brought up. We have already seen that due to the crowding on the beaches and the lack of small craft, the French were unable to land before the 27th. Even a small body like the Zion Mule Corps took three days to disembark at V beach. Moreover, the unloading of the stores and material of the 29th. Division was not completed until 10 days after the landing. Given this situation it is doubtful if the necessary small craft would have been available to land an extra division, or if they had, that the congestion on the beaches would have enabled their supplies to have been landed. Furthermore, if a third division had landed and advanced inland say for three or four miles, it is possible that they would have outrun their logistic support. With the troops virtually on the edge of the coast it was just

(1) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.1, p. 292.
(2) Ibid., p. 291.
(3) 29th. Division War Diary 28/4/15, W.O. 95/4304.
(4) Dardanelles Commission, Statement by Lt-Col. Patterson, Cab. 19/30.
(5) "Note on The Landing Near Cape Helles" by Brig-Gen. A.W. Roper 10/5/15, W.O. 95/4264.
possible to manhandle ammunition to the front line. If these troops had been 2 miles inland it has been calculated that only $\frac{1}{2}$ the ammunition asked for could have been supplied. Thus a rapid advance could have been followed by an equally rapid retreat. In these circumstances the best that Hamilton could have hoped for was to capture Krithia or Achi Baba. Of course proponents of the plan would argue that this would have been sufficient, that the possession Achi Baba would have enabled Hamilton to bring the Narrows forts under direct artillery and howitzer fire and that with the increased accuracy obtainable from shore based guns, could have knocked the forts out. These assumptions are hardly justified. As many observers have pointed out there is "Not the slightest observation over Chanak or the Narrow from [Achi Baba]." The view is completely obscured by a nearby spur and the Kilid Bahr Plateau. Thus no assistance to the fleet could have been provided by the occupation of Achi Baba. The capture of this hill would certainly have provided relief to the troops at the foot of the Peninsula because of the excellent artillery observation point it offered to the south but considering the campaign as a whole it was only one step along the road. The most formidable obstacle, the Kilid Bahr Plateau, was yet to come and this precipitate feature was two miles beyond Achi Baba.

As far as the Anzac landing is concerned only three questions need be asked, all of which are related to the central theme of why the landing failed to achieve its objectives. These are; why were the troops landed in the wrong place?; did this affect the success of the operation?; were there any other factors which caused the plan to fail?

(1) Notes on Landing at W Beach by Major Striedenger, W.O. 95/4304.
(2) Bean's Diary, quoted in Bean C.E.W., Gallipoli Mission, Canberra, Australian War Memorial, 1948, p. 306.
It is well known that the Anzacs landed about one mile north of their intended landfall and that this put them in front of extremely difficult country across which they were never able substantially to advance. Various theories have been put forward to explain this initial mistake. It has been claimed that navigational difficulties led the ships to anchor too far to the north; to that the current carried the picket boats to the north; and that the guide boats missed the course in the dark. Eric Bush, after an extensive investigation, concluded that the naval officer in the guiding picket boat moved the tows north on his own initiative because he thought the original landing place too heavily defended. The War Diaries for the period are unhelpful in resolving the problem. The orders for the covering force merely state that the troops were to land between Gaba Tepe and Fishermans Hut, a distance of about 4 miles. The entry for April 25th. in the First Australian Division's Diary does not even mention that the landing took place at the wrong location. It is possible however that there is yet a further explanation for the supposed error. Birdwood's orders gave him two main objectives. The covering force was to occupy the spurs of the Sari Bair Ridge and the main force was to push on across the Peninsula and take Mal Tepe which commanded the key road supplying all forces to the south. Birdwood was much more concerned about the first objective than the second. A few days before the landing he said "I shall hope to secure the whole of the hill [Sari Bair] and entrench myself, when I shall feel pretty secure of holding my own against anything that can come against me, and if possible, I shall hope to shove on in the direction of Mal Tepe." It is obvious

(1) Godfrey, Naval Memoirs V. 7, 1915-1919, p. 3-4, Godfrey Papers, 1/2.
(2) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.1, p. 174.
(3) Bean C.E.W., The Story of Anzac V.1, p. 250
(5) 1st Australian Division, General Staff Diary, 25/4/15, W.O. 95/4326.
from this statement that Birdwood's main objective on April 25th. was the Sari Bair Ridge. Moreover, in the same letter Birdwood indicated that if he found that the original beach could be brought under heavy shell fire he intended to move the whole landing north near Fisherman's hut. Thus Birdwood was worried about the choice of landing place and intended to first concentrate his attention on the capture of the Sari Bair Ridge, which of course was well to the north of the chosen beach. Did he alter at the last minute the landing instructions to fit in with these factors? It has been suggested by Howe, who witnessed the landing, that this was the case and that Birdwood did alter the landing place after the main convoy left Lemnos. However there is a certain amount of evidence against this view. Birdwood was well aware of the difficult country to the north of the original site and there were no orders issued from the battleship to indicate that any change had been made. On the other hand, after the landing, Birdwood never lost any opportunity to stress how providential it had been that the landing had been made in the wrong place as the original beach had been heavily wired.

What difference did the northerly landing make to the operation? It meant that as the tows bunched together, because of the restricted size of Anzac Cove, the landing took place on a much narrower front than had been intended and this made deployment of troops inland much more difficult. This bunching also caused units to become mixed. It has been stated that the troops lost cohesion because they found themselves faced with unfamiliar country but, the maps of the area were so poor, and as few of the men had

(1) Birdwood to Fitzgerald 19/4/15, Kitchener Papers, Pro 30/57/61.
(3) The Queen issued an order on the night of the 24th, shifting the landing place about 800 yards to the south. (The signal reads, "Queen's boats will land on the beach about 1 mile North of Kaba Tepe" Altered to 800 yards [by signal?] Queen 7.5 p.m. April 24." (Adm. 116/1434). There seems to be no satisfactory explanation for this. If the signal read "Altered by 800 yards almost the exact landing place would be obtained but such speculation is futile.
any idea where they were landing anyway, this factor has probably been exaggerated. The difficulty of the country rather than its unfamiliarity is probably a more important factor. Thus the tangled and tortuous ravines and spurs made merely reaching the first ridge an achievement and although the landing was opposed only by two companies of Turkish troops, no coherent move inland could be organized. A few parties of men did manage to advance to the second ridge and beyond but they remained isolated and tended to diverge in different directions because of the rough going.

These are important considerations in assessing the reasons for the failure of the plan, but it is doubtful if the scheme as outlined by Hamilton ever had a chance of success. It was really absurdly ambitious to expect a force of two divisions to capture a succession of difficult positions along a ridge 4 or 5 miles long, advance 4 miles across the Peninsula, capture more difficult positions and beat off any counter attacks after this had been done. To this extent Birdwood's unilateral decision to restrict the objective to the Sari Bair Ridge would seem to be justified. Although the ground to the south facing the original landing place was easier it was difficult enough and it still would have been necessary to negotiate the Sari Bair Ridge. Walking over the ground after the war, Bean found the objectives almost impossible to attain even with the help of a Turkish guide.

There were to be no further opportunities to break through from Anzac. By the evening of the 26th. the preponderance of troops in the allies' favour had fallen to less than 2 to 1. Moreover the Turks had always been able to reach the high ground ahead of the attackers and it soon became clear that no further advance was possible.

(1) James, Gallipoli, p. 107.
(2) Mitchell Committee Report, Map 16.
(3) Bean, Gallipoli Mission, p. 277-8.
(4) Miles, Notes on the Dardanelles Campaign, 1925, p. 130.
A few days later a renewed attempt was made to break out from Hellas. The only result was to decimate the southern force, 6,500 casualties being suffered in three days.\footnote{Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.1, p. 347.} This experience only made Hunter-Weston more determined than ever to break through and a mixed brigade of Australian and New Zealand troops was brought to Hellas to spearhead a new attack on May 8th. The assault was a fiasco. The troops were thrown in without proper orders and with less than two hours notice. Some had little idea of where the Turkish front line was situated.\footnote{Brereton C.B., Tales of Three Campaigns, London, Selwyn and Blount, 1926, p. 116-7. Brereton was with the New Zealand contingent.} After the war it became clear that the advance had not even reached the main enemy trench but had been stopped by a line of skirmishers 100 yards in front of it.\footnote{Bean, Gallipoli Mission, p. 301-2.} Hamilton's force, for the moment, had shot its bolt.

The landings immediately demonstrated that one of the assumptions on which the decision to launch a combined operation, namely that troops would restore the prestige lost in southern Europe by the Fleet, was false. In the event the news of the landings caused hardly a stir in the Balkans. Indeed the actions of two states, Roumania and Bulgaria, indicated that the cause of the entente had become less attractive at this time. In late April and early May they raised their price for entering the war by increasing their territorial demands to completely unrealistic dimensions.\footnote{For Roumania see Smith C.J., The Russian Struggle For Power 1914-1917, N.Y. Philosophical Library, 1956, p. 290-1; for Bulgaria, Bax-Ironsìde to Grey 8/5/15, F.O. 371/2245.} It is clear that the event which precipitated this action was the series of defeats inflicted on Russia by the German armies.\footnote{See Bax-Ironsìde to Grey 9/5/15, F.O. 371/2245.} If the British expected these setbacks to be offset by an army of 70,000 men that was manifestly finding the Turks difficult to defeat they were deluded. The attention of the Balkan States continued to be focused on the Eastern Front.

In Britain the news of the landings was greeted with mixed feelings.

It was felt that to effect a lodgement ashore in enemy territory was a...
great achievement. On the other hand the heavy casualties caused concern. Churchill was one of the first to react. He wrote to Kitchener suggesting that an extra 20,000 men be sent to Hamilton, adding that "My feeling is you are running it vy. fine" but he then withheld the letter. In any case it would have been difficult for Kitchener to have responded to Churchill's suggestion for no request had yet been received from Hamilton for reinforcements. This request did not arrive until 28th. and even then Hamilton merely suggested to Kitchener that he be allowed to draw on contingents from Egypt in case of future need. This reluctance on Hamilton's part to ask for reinforcements was to become one of the features of the campaign. On those rare occasions when definite requests were sent to Kitchener they were usually written with a jaunty optimism hardly in keeping with the strategic situation and which Hamilton himself later described as "mealy mouthed". Hamilton's post-war explanation of his attitude was that Kitchener had made him promise not to ask for reinforcements before sending him to the east. But even if such a promise had been made Hamilton had a duty, if he saw a need for reinforcements, to place the issue squarely before Kitchener. Perhaps the fact that Hamilton had served on Kitchener's staff in South Africa led him to adopt a deferential approach.

In any event Hamilton received Kitchener's permission to take the 42nd. Division and an Indian brigade from Egypt and with these fresh troops he began to plan for his next attack. It was clear however, that this attack could not take place for some time and in the interval attention turned once more to the Navy.

In late March, when Churchill had acquiesed in de Robeck's decision to

(4) Hamilton to the Cabinet Office (Historical Section) 30/1/29, Cab. 45/242.
call off the naval attack, he had asked the Admiral what he proposed to do if the Army was checked.¹ De Robeck had replied that if it was thought that by forcing the Narrows the Navy could assist the Army the attempt would be made. At the same time he made it clear, that he considered the Fleet could best assist the Army "from below Chanak with communications intact...[rather than] from above cut off from its base".² Now the situation outlined by Churchill had arisen and de Robeck immediately came under pressure to renew the attack on the Narrows. On May 3rd. the French Admiral, Guepratte, suggested sending four battleships to rush the Straits.³ Then on the 9th. Keyes strongly urged the renewal of the "methodical approach" using the new minesweeping force.⁴ De Robeck refused to alter his previous decision but he was induced to write to the Admiralty setting out the issues. These he saw as (1) Could forcing the Straits ensure the success of the operation? (2) Would a reverse jeopardize the position of the army? He reiterated his own opinion that the answer to the first point was no and to the second, yes.⁵ It is hard to disagree with this judgement. Practically the whole Fleet was now needed to support the army with fire power and to keep it supplied. The loss of even three or four ships must have placed operations ashore in danger. In addition, the ammunition supply of the Fleet had not improved. On May 1st. it was found that the entire Fleet had only 400 rounds of 12" shells and a similar amount of 7.5".⁶ It is extremely doubtful if these limited supplies would have been enough to allow extensive operations against the Turkish forts, the Turkish Navy, and perhaps Constantinople, as well as supporting the army. According to Fisher, Churchill was prepared to ignore these

(2) de Robeck to Churchill 29/3/15, C.V.3, p. 759.
(4) Keyes to his wife 10/5/15, Keyes Papers, 2/11.
(5) de Robeck to the Admiralty 10/5/15, Adm. 137/154.
(6) Keyes to Braithwaite 1/5/15, Keyes Papers, 5/2.
difficulties and proposed to send a telegram to de Robeck strongly suggesting that a further attempt be made with the Fleet. Fisher, supported by a memorandum from Jackson, which stated that as there was insufficient ammunition to resume the methodical approach the only operation that could be contemplated was a rush at the Straits, refused to sanction Churchill's telegram and sent a copy of a memorandum setting out his case to Asquith. Churchill replied to Fisher by insisting that he was not suggesting that de Robeck rush the Straits, thus missing the point that this was now the only operation possible, and reminded Fisher that he was "absolutely committed" to the enterprise. Fisher, however, refused to budge and on the 13th. had an interview with Asquith which he called the "most satisfactory" of his life. What transpired between Fisher and Asquith is not known but later that day Churchill wrote to de Robeck that "the moment for an independent Naval attempt to force the Narrows has passed". Fisher had won but he warned Asquith, "I honestly feel I cannot remain where I am much longer, as there is an inevitable and never-ceasing drain daily (almost hourly) of our resources in the decisive theatre of the War...[you] ought to know, that I feel my time is short!"

On May 14th. the War Council held its first formal meeting since March 19th. Kitchener began by reading a pessimistic statement on the war in which he stated that a German invasion of England was now a distinct possibility. He also attacked the Admiralty for withdrawing the Queen Elizabeth from the Dardanelles and claimed that he had first been convinced that the operation might succeed by the First Lord's statement of the power of the ships 15" guns. However, it was noticed earlier that Kitchener was enthusiastic for action at the Dardanelles after the need for a demon-

(1) Hankey, Diary 11/5/15, Hankey Papers, 1/1.
(2) Jackson, "Note On The Passage Of The Dardanelles From The Sea of Marmora In Case Such An Operation Was Necessary To Obtain Supplies etc." 11/5/15, Adm. 137/154.
(4) Fisher to Asquith 12/5/15, Asquith Papers, 27/139-144.
(6) Fisher to Churchill 12/5/15, in Ibid.
(7) Hankey, Diary 13/5/15, Hankey Papers, 1/1.
(9) Fisher to Asquith 13/5/15, C.V.3, p. 870.
straction to aid Russia in the Caucasus had passed and before the Admiralty had added the Queen Elizabeth to Carden's Fleet. Clearly he had arrived at this position without being subjected to outside pressure. In any case Churchill explained to Kitchener that the monitors which would replace the Queen Elizabeth were collectively more powerful than the battleship. He then added "If we had known three months ago that an army of from 80,000 to 100,000 men would now be available for the attack on the Dardanelles, the naval attack would never have been undertaken". This remarkable statement ignored the fact that a force of 80-100,000 men was only provided because the naval attack had failed and that in March it was extremely unlikely that either Kitchener or the War Council would have sanctioned the removal of a large number of troops from the main theatre. Clearly this was a day for recriminations, for when Fisher was asked for his view "He reminded the War Council that he had been no party to the Dardanelles operations" a scarcely accurate but, from Churchill's standpoint, a truly ominous contribution.

Churchill had noted Fisher's intervention with concern, and later in the day had a long discussion with him on the Dardanelles and what reinforcements de Robeck should be sent. The meeting seemed to end satisfactorily. Crease, Fisher's secretary, recalled that Churchill came out of Fisher's room smiling and said "Well, good-night Fisher. We have settled everything and you must go home and get a good night's rest. Things will look brighter in the morning and we will put the thing (i.e. Dardanelles) through together." As was his habit, Churchill then embodied in a minute what he thought had been agreed, for Fisher's approval in the morning. Later he made a pencilled amendment to this minute adding a

(1) War Council Minutes 14/5/15, Cab. 42/2/19.
(2) Ibid.
further two E class submarines for de Robeck. According to Crease it was this addition plus the fact that Churchill had increased the number of monitors to be sent to the Dardanelles which caused Fisher to resign the next morning. Crease also claimed that when he first saw the amended minute he told Churchill's secretary, Masterton-Smith, that Fisher might resign whereupon Masterton-Smith had taken the minute back to Churchill only to be assured that all was in order. However, neither Masterton-Smith nor Churchill could recall this incident. After reading Fisher's resignation letter, which indicated that the Admiral had left for Scotland, Churchill informed Asquith, who wrote out a note ordering Fisher to return to his post. Churchill then composed a reply to Fisher. He suggested that they meet to discuss a proposition than he wanted, with the consent of Asquith, to put before him. He reminded Fisher that "In order to bring you back to the Admiralty I took my political life in my hands with the King and the Prime Minister". Fisher, who had obviously not gone to Scotland, would not be tempted. He told Churchill, "You will remain and I shall go - It is better so - Your splendid stand on my behalf with the King and Prime Minister I can never forget...but here is a question beyond all personal obligations." A further exchange of letters did nothing to alter the situation.

Later in the day the Junior Sea Lords intervened in the crisis. They wrote to Churchill and Fisher stating that they considered Fisher's resignation had been caused largely by the First Lord's continual interference in operational matters, but suggested that these difficulties should be "capable of adjustment by mutual ... concession" in the national interest.

(4) Fisher to Churchill 15/5/15, Churchill Papers 8/177.
(7) Fisher to Churchill 16/5/15, in Ibid.
(8) Churchill to Fisher 16/5/15; Fisher to Churchill 16/5/15, in Ibid.
a strong hint that Fisher should return to his post and Churchill mend his ways. It was clear from the tone of the letter that the Sea Lords saw it as their duty to remain in office until the crisis had been resolved. A copy of the letter was sent to Asquith. After receiving the Sea Lord's letter, Churchill apparently drove to Asquith's country house and informed him that he could reconstitute the Board with Sir Arthur Wilson taking Fisher's place and the Junior Sea Lords remaining in their respective offices. However, it is by no means certain that this accurately represented the Junior Sea Lords' position. According to one version of events, on May 17th. Hamilton (2nd. Sea Lord) had asked Captain Hall (D.N.I.) to inform Asquith via Lord Reading that if Fisher had definitely resigned the Sea Lords considered Churchill should also go. Presumably they adjudged Fisher the only man likely to keep Churchill's activities within reasonable bounds. Thus their support for Churchill was conditional on Fisher returning to office. However, this is contradicted by Hall's biographer who claims that the Hall-Reading conversations concerned only Fisher, the Sea Lords' opinion being that his return to office would be a national disaster. The first version does have support from another source. Hankey recorded in his diary on May 20th. (that is when the Sea Lords knew that Fisher would not be returning) that "senior Admiralty officials favoured a Balfour-Wilson or a Balfour-Jackson administration". In short, when it was clear that Fisher would not return the Sea Lords immediately withdrew support from Churchill.

Any chance Churchill had of remaining at the Admiralty was ended on the 17th. On that day Asquith capitulated to Bonar Law's demand for a coalition government, and it was highly unlikely that Conservatives would

(2) Hamilton to Jellicoe 16/5/15, quoted in "A Reply to Criticism", Jellicoe Papers, Add/Mss. 49041.
(5) Hankey Diary 20/5/15, Hankey Papers, 1/1.
(6) Asquith to Lord Stamfordham 17/5/15, Asquith Papers, 27/162.
serve in a government in which Churchill continued to direct the naval war. Sir Henry Wilson had already warned Bonar Law that Churchill was largely responsible for holding up reinforcements for France. Fisher then informed the Conservative leader that the reason for his resignation had been his inability to work with Churchill. In the course of the day Bonar Law made it known to Lloyd George that Churchill could not remain at the Admiralty, and Churchill was informed of this decision by Asquith. Churchill's fall had been accomplished in a remarkably short time and Churchill obviously had difficulty in adjusting to the new situation. Not realizing that his credit was exhausted and his influence nil, he wrote to Asquith with various suggestions for the new government,

"I am sure L.G. will not do for W.O. Balfour with L.G. doing Munitions as well as Treasury wd be a far sounder arrangement. So far as I am concerned if you find it necessary to make a change here [had he not realized he was to go?] I shd be glad - assuming it was thought fitting - to be offered a position in the new government. But I will not take any office except a military department, & if that is not convenient I hope I may be found employment in the field."4

Meanwhile a dramatic event had taken place at sea. The German Fleet had left harbour. Churchill returned to the Admiralty and the Grand Fleet was ordered out. Would a victory at sea have been enough to restore Churchill's flagging fortunes? He must have contemplated this question as the two fleets drew closer together. But it was not to be. Before Jellicoe could intercept the High Sea Fleet, Scheer reversed course and returned to base.

On the 18th. Churchill at last began to realize that his position was desperate. For the second time in three days he had been attacked editorially in the Times. He now wrote to Asquith, saying that if the Colonial Office was still open to him (he had apparently refused it on

(1) Wilson to Bonar Law 16/5/15, Bonar Law Papers, 37/2/33.
(2) Fisher to Bonar Law 17/5/15, in Ibid, 37/2/35.
(4) Churchill to Asquith 17/5/15, Asquith Papers, 14/32-33.
the 17th.), he "shd not be right to refuse it".  

He still considered there was a chance that he could remain at the Admiralty and he concluded, "Above all things I shd like to stay here - & complete my work...If Balfour were to go the War Office the two departments wd work with perfect smoothness". 

The suggestion that Kitchener, whom the Conservatives considered indispensable, be sacked to enable Churchill, whom they considered a menace, to remain was received in silence by Asquith.

Although by the 18th. it had been decided that Churchill should leave the Admiralty, Fisher's position was still undetermined. In a letter to him on the 17th. Asquith hinted that he might not be excluded from office. On the same day Bonar Law advised him to "keep yourself free until the new Gvt is formed". These messages apparently gave Fisher the false impression that his position was relatively secure and that he could dictate terms. Perhaps advised by Lord Esher, Fisher sent Asquith what amounted to an ultimatum. He demanded that Churchill and Wilson be excluded from the Admiralty and that he be given complete control of the War at Sea, the sole right to distribute the fleet and a veto on all naval appointments. This amazing document was seen by many as proof that Fisher had gone mad and certainly ended any prospects he had of returning to the Admiralty.

Strangely, the existence of this document remained unknown to Churchill until 1927. Then he was sent a copy by Asquith who uncovered it when compiling his memoirs. Churchill was amazed by the lack of charity shown by the old Admiral. He told Asquith,

"his attitude towards me seems to have been fairly cold-blooded. However, justice was done and he paid the penalty to the full. Never again did he exercise power or influence. My archives are full of the letters he used to write to me after

(1) Churchill to Asquith 18/5/15, Asquith Papers, 14/34-5.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Asquith to Fisher 17/5/15, quoted in Marder A.J., Fear God V.3, p. 239.
(8) According to Donald, Fisher's return was still under consideration when this letter arrived "and stopped negotiations". Donald to Fisher 8/6/15, Donald Papers, House of Lords Record Office, London, D/4/12.
we had made friends again, showing how he was eating his heart out in impotence and rueing the day he cast decency and good faith to the winds. In all the circumstances I cannot pretend to bewail his pangs. I am glad he lived to endure them."  

Churchill was also living in a dream world. On the 19th. Sir A. Wilson told Asquith that, while he had consented to serve under Churchill, he would not take office under any other First Lord. Churchill, considering his position had been greatly strengthened, immediately wrote to Asquith saying that he was now confident that he could get a Board as "The Three Naval Lords are also ready to serve under me". However, it seems certain that Asquith now knew that opinion at the Admiralty favoured the removal of both Churchill and Fisher. Also Wilson was not the asset that Churchill imagined. Jellicoe had told Hamilton that Wilson's strategic ideas were so ludicrous that "we all doubted his sanity", and Fisher warned Bonar Law that, if Wilson were appointed First Sea Lord, Jellicoe would resign. Churchill's position deteriorated further when Lord Emmot, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, told Asquith that Churchill's appointment to the Colonial Office would cause a revolt among the permanent officials and W.M.R. Pringle, a back bench Liberal M.P., informed the Prime Minister that a group of his supporters in the Commons regarded Churchill's presence in the Government "as a public danger".

Churchill seemed oblivious to the fact that he had hardly a supporter left at Whitehall. More incredible, he still believed that he had a role to play concerning the composition of the new government and patronage to bestow. Late on the 19th. he sent Lambert, the Civil Lord at the Admiralty, to Fisher offering him "any terms he liked, including a seat in

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(1) Asquith to Churchill 13/9/27; Churchill to Asquith 15/9/27, Copy Churchill Papers
(2) Wilson to Asquith 19/5/15, Asquith Papers, 27/170.
(3) Churchill to Asquith 20/5/15, Asquith Papers, 14/43-44.
(4) Jellicoe to Hamilton 19/5/15, Hamilton Papers, HTN/125.
the Cabinet, if he would stay with him at Admiralty". This remarkable offer, which was hardly Churchill's to make, was turned down by Fisher who immediately informed Bonar Law of Churchill's action.

Perhaps the suddenness of his fall had induced in Churchill a state resembling shock for even on the 21st. he believed he could remain at the Admiralty. In expressing this hope he told Asquith "It is no clinging to office or to this particular office or my own interest or advancement wh moves me. I am clinging to my task & my duty. I am straining to make good the formidable undertaking in wh we are engaged; & wh I know - with Arthur Wilson - I can alone discharge". These hopes were finally dashed by Bonar Law. In a desperate attempt to win over the Conservatives Churchill had sent a folder of documents to Bonar Law which he claimed told the true story of Antwerp, Coronel and the Three Cruisers. Bonar Law now replied thanking Churchill but saying that his removal from the Admiralty was inevitable.

Finally, Churchill accepted defeat. In a mood of contrition he wrote to Asquith "I am very sorry for yr troubles, and sorry to have been the cause of a situation wh has enabled others to bring them upon you - I will accept any office - the lowest if you like - that you care to offer me". For the first time since Fisher's resignation Asquith replied to Churchill. He told him that it was settled that he was not to remain at the Admiralty and continued "Every one has to make sacrifices: no one more than I, who have to part company with valued and faithful colleagues.... I cannot, of course, make any definite offer of any particular place." Churchill may have mused that any sacrifices made by Asquith were, at that moment, extremely difficult to detect; certainly he felt much bitterness.

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(1) Hankey Diary 19/5/15, Hankey Papers, 1/1.
(2) Fisher to Bonar Law 19/5/15, Bonar Law Papers, 37/2/34.
(3) Churchill to Asquith 21/5/15, Asquith Papers, 47-49.
(6) Churchill to Asquith 21/5/15, Asquith Papers, 14/51.
towards his former chief for his lack of support during and after the crisis. However, there was little that Asquith could have done to save him. The Conservatives were implacable in their desire to remove Churchill from the Admiralty and it has been shown that even a section of the Liberal Party looked upon Churchill's fall with equanimity. Churchill never realized how hostile opinion was towards him or what a liability to his party he had become. In the circumstances he was fortunate in being offered a Cabinet post, even if the lowly office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and still more fortunate in retaining his seat on the War Council or, as it now was to become, the Dardanelles Committee.

Once more, the events covered in the first part of this chapter are described in great detail in *The World Crisis*. Over 70 pages are devoted to the period between the beginning of April and the removal of Churchill from office on May 26th. Whole chapters are devoted to the landings on Gallipoli on April 25th and the May political crisis. As in other sections on the Dardanelles, the large amount of space devoted to quotations from original documents, letters and occasionally books, continues. In these chapters the quotations provide over 40% of the material. Once more Churchill is largely relying on these documents to vindicate his actions. He has proved any more successful than in the sections investigated so far?

For convenience Churchill's account may be divided into six sections, the various controversies in late March surrounding the 29th. Division, the planning of the military attack and Fisher's reaction to it, the landings at Anzac and Hellas and the further battles in the South during April, the effect of the landings on opinion at home and abroad, Churchill's attempt to have the naval attack reviewed and the May political crisis in Britain.

Two most important issues relate to the 29th. Division. Churchill places great emphasis on the two-week delay in the departure of the Division

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2 Approximately 32 pages out of 76.
from England and also strongly criticizes the way in which the transports were packed when it was sent. On the second point he states

"[The 29th. Division] had been embarked in twenty-two transports without any idea of having to fight immediately. The ammunition was in one ship, the transport in another, the harness in a third, the machine guns at the bottom of the hold, and so on. Before these trained and excellent troops could go into action, they would have to be disembarked either by small boats in still water or upon a quay, and then completely re-sorted, and organized in fighting trim. Mudros harbour (in Lemnos) offered neither facility."

For this situation he blames Kitchener who "had allowed the division to be embarked otherwise than in order for battle". However, it should be pointed out that when the 29th. Division left England (even with the delay) there was no suggestion that it would be involved in immediate fighting. Indeed, it will be remembered that Churchill strenuously denied this possibility, maintaining that the 29th. Division would only be used to "reap the fruits" of the naval attack. There was thus no perceived need to despatch the division in battle order. Further, even if the need had been foreseen, the transports could not have been packed suitably without detailed landing plans, including which contingents were designated for which beaches. These plans, it was shown earlier, could only have been drawn up on the spot by Hamilton and could not have been available in England.

A similar case can be made against Churchill's criticism of the two-week delay in despatching the 29th. Division from England. Churchill contends that if despatched on time and in battle order the 29th. Division would have arrived at the Dardanelles in mid-March and could then have "gone into action within days of its arrival". Once again Churchill discreetly ignores the fact that such immediate use of the 29th. Division was not contemplated at the time of its departure from England. The delay in its arrival at the Dardanelles did not, therefore, affect the plans in

(1) The World Crisis, p. 655. See also p. 616, p. 630-1, p. 656, p. 666.  
(2) Ibid., p. 666.  
(3) Ibid., p. 630.
force at the time. Furthermore, it has been shown that it was extremely
doubtful whether the division could have been used immediately had it
arrived in mid-March. The weather in March and April was extremely
unsettled and in fact a strong gale was in force between March 19 and
the end of the month.

Churchill's contention also assumes that the landing of the 29th.
Division could have been improvised within a few days. In view of the
complexity of combined operations, this assumption is extremely doubtful.

To Churchill, however, the delayed departure of the 29th. Division
and the faulty packing of its transports form yet another link in that
chain of causation which he builds up throughout The World Crisis to
explain the defeat at the Dardanelles. They became two more "accidents
of fate" along the "path of Destiny". 1

In an earlier section of The World Crisis Churchill implies that it
would have been worth taking the risk of landing the 29th. Division in
uncertain conditions because of the virtually undefended state of the
Peninsula in March. To support this case he quotes lengthy extracts from
the memoirs of Liman von Sanders to show how the Turkish defences were
strengthened during April. 2 There is no doubt that much was accomplished
by Liman in the month after his appointment to the 5th. Army and that
landing at the end of April was a more difficult proposition than in mid-
March. However, it was suggested earlier that the German Commander made
rather too little of the work that had been done prior to his taking command,
and his usefulness as a source on this question is therefore doubtful. Thus
Liman does not mention the fact that by mid-March all the landing beaches
chosen by Hamilton were mined and overlooked by trenches, and consequently
Churchill does not mention this point either. In fact, this point makes a
critical difference to Churchill's case, for if the beaches were defended an

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1 The World Crisis, p. 636.
2 Ibid., p. 684-6.
improvised plan would have run into series difficulties and given that the uncertain weather would have made reinforcement and resupply of the force ashore hazardous, may have converted the enterprise into a risk not worth taking.

On the planning of the military attack The World Crisis is virtually silent. In fact there is nothing at all on Hamilton's plan in the narrative chapters and it is to the retrospective chapter "The Case for Perseverance and Decision" that we have to turn to obtain some clue of Churchill's thinking on the subject. Why this should be so will be investigated shortly, but first the points made in this retrospective chapter should be examined.

The subject discussed in the most detail by Churchill is the adequacy of Hamilton's force for the task in hand. He writes,

"at the period which this story has now reached [April 1915] at least 40,000 Turks were known to have been assembled, and to have made and be making whatever preparations were possible; and to overwhelm these with certainty before they could be reinforced might well have required an army of a hundred thousand men. Without such numbers the enterprise passed out of the sphere of sound preparation and reasonable certainty, and depended for its success upon good fortune and a great feat of arms."¹

Few would disagree with this analysis. However the reader gains no inkling from this passage that Churchill himself was at the time reassuring Balfour that "the military could do it" and telling the War Council that he saw no difficulty in effecting a landing. Therefore the passage in The World Crisis will be taken as a stricture only against Kitchener.

Churchill, goes further than merely criticizing the size of the original force. He states that adequate reinforcements should have been on hand to be used as required,

"To descend upon the Peninsula in the greatest possible numbers and the shortest possible time; to grapple with the local Turkish forces; to fight them day and night with superior numbers till they were utterly exhausted, to thrust in fresh troops and renew the battle unceasingly, to grip and racket the weaker enemy

(1) The World Crisis, p. 686.
till the life was shaken out of his smaller organism - in that process lay victory."  

There are two dubious assumptions here. The first is that British and French troops could be fed into the battle faster by sea than the Turkish forces could be reinforced by land. It was shown earlier that to land the 29th Division and all its stores took more than a week. To land further divisions could have taken even longer as the crowding on the beaches became more acute. Moreover, British divisions had to be sent from France, a journey of at least ten days, and unless six or seven divisions had been sent at once (probably an impossibility due to the shortage of shipping) it is hard to see how a preponderance of troops could have been built up over the Turks, who could reinforce by a shorter sea journey from Constantinople or by ferry across the Straits. This brings us to Churchill's second assumption, that the Turkish Army was the "weaker" and "smaller organism". In the context of Gallipoli this was not true. The Turks had an army of over 500,000 men, a large proportion of which could be concentrated on the peninsula. The troops that could be spared for the Dardanelles by the British and French were never likely to approach that number, let alone reach the superiority needed in the prevailing conditions to obtain victory. Thus it was not a matter of throwing troops in until the Turks were overwhelmed by weight of numbers, as Churchill implies, for such a situation could never be attained.

This digression on troop strengths ends Churchill's discussion of the planning of the military attack. In the first half of this chapter it was thought worthwhile to investigate this question to show that there are many areas of controversy concerning Hamilton's plan. Did he choose the correct places to land? Why did he choose Hellas knowing that the help offered by the Navy was likely to be small? Why was the main landing made against the most heavily defended area? Why did not Hamilton query the size of his

(1) The World Crisis, p. 687.
force? Why did he remain so confident in the face of pessimistic appreciations by his divisional commanders? The World Crisis is silent on all these questions. It is very uncharacteristic for Churchill to avoid areas of controversy associated with battles. It is plain why he did so in this instance. Throughout the writing of The World Crisis Churchill was in touch with Hamilton and Aspinall, the two men most involved with the planning of the April 25th landings. Aspinall had supplied Churchill with information concerning Hamilton's appointment and the way in which the staff had been assembled for the operation and, as will be shown, he was able to pass on a great deal of material on Gallipoli which he was collecting for the official history. Hamilton and Churchill were old friends and they collaborated over their evidence to the Dardanelles Commission. It is also clear from the Churchill papers that Hamilton read other Dardanelles chapters of The World Crisis in proof. The reason for Churchill's reticence now becomes clear. To criticize the April 25th. plan it would have been necessary for Churchill to criticize two friends who had been very useful to him in the past and whose general view of the Dardanelles operation - that it had been ruined by Kitchener - was identical to his own. Churchill was obviously not prepared to do this and apparently decided to avoid the issue altogether. What he actually thought of the plan is therefore not known but given the way it is treated in The World Crisis the reader is invited to make the assumption that the plan was sound and that it was the blunders made by Kitchener that caused it to go awry.

It should come as no surprise to those who have read the preceding chapters that respecting this period Churchill misrepresents the attitude of Fisher towards the military attack in The World Crisis. After March

(2) Hamilton Sir Ian, Listening For the Drums, London, Faber, 1944, p. 254.
(3) Hamilton to Churchill 28/6/23, Churchill Papers 8/44
(4) Hamilton Sir Ian, Listening For the Drums, p. 254.
18, Churchill claims,
"the attitude of the First Sea Lord had become one of quasi-detachment. He was greatly relieved that the burden had now been assumed by the Army. He approved every operational telegram which I or the Chief of the Staff drafted for him. In the end he assented to whatever steps were considered necessary for the proper support of the Army. But while he welcomed every sign of the despatch of troops, he grudged every form of additional naval aid."¹

Thus we have a picture of Fisher, approving of the combined operation, but attempting to reduce to a minimum the material supplied to the Navy to enable it to carry out its part, a basically irrational approach. It would be a mistake to exaggerate Fisher's rationality during this period but the evidence brought forward earlier would suggest that his approach to the military landing was far sounder than that of Churchill and significantly different from that outlined in The World Crisis. It will be remembered that Fisher was not at all "relieved that the burden had now been assumed by the Army". He had little faith in Hamilton's judgment (amply justified in the circumstances) and suggested on several occasions that the War Council reconsider the whole operation. This can hardly be characterized as an attitude of "quasi-detachment". In fact Fisher was asking many of the important questions which Churchill and Kitchener seemed to be avoiding (What are the prospects of success with the force available? Were siege operations likely to develop on Gallipoli? Should not the War Council form an independent judgment on these points?) These questions show that Fisher had little confidence in the military attack and, although Churchill is correct in stating that Fisher did all he could to limit the role of the Navy at the Dardanelles, it is hardly accurate to say that he looked forward with relief to the landings on the Peninsula.

To prove Fisher's adherence to the Dardanelles enterprise Churchill quotes Fisher's reply of April 8th. to the enquiry of the Junior Sea Lords

¹ The World Crisis, p. 708.
that the Dardanelles operation was not endangering the Grand Fleet.\(^1\) It will be remembered that Fisher's mild reply, to the effect that he was satisfied with the position, was probably designed to silence the Sea Lords, with whom he had no intention of sharing matters of strategy. Thus it would seem that Churchill has chosen this incident carefully to illustrate his case whereas a franker statement of Fisher's view would include Fisher's memorandum of the same date (8th.) in which he suggested that the entire attack be diverted to Haifa in case failure jeopardised the entry of Italy into the war. This document finds no place in The World Crisis.

One other point should be made about the Churchill-Fisher relationship as dealt with in this section of The World Crisis. To illustrate Fisher's attitude Churchill quotes sections of their correspondence during this period.\(^2\) The letters chosen certainly expose Fisher's attempts to restrict the ships and material received by de Robeck. It is noticeable, however, that correspondence indicating Fisher's doubts about the military operations such as his memorandum of March 31st. is carefully excluded.\(^3\)

We must now turn to an examination of Churchill's account of the landings of April 25th. Churchill begins his narrative with a description of the Gallipoli Peninsula. "Outside the Straits the landing-places are comparatively few. The cliffs fall precipitately to the sea and are pierced only by occasional narrow gullies. The surface of the Peninsula is covered for the most part with scrub, interspersed with patches of cultivation."\(^4\)

\(^{1}\) The World Crisis, p. 713-14.

\(^{2}\) Ibid., p. 710-3.

\(^{3}\) Churchill Papers 8/147. From a letter written by Fisher on March 16th. Churchill omits the following rebuke: "Your big idea of three British armies in Holland in May obliterated by Bulair." This idea of Churchill's never progressed due to Dutch neutrality and is unimportant in a strategic sense. However, it was noted in an earlier chapter that Churchill had removed all mention of this scheme, which came to prominence in early January, from The World Crisis in order to emphasize his long held preference for action at the Dardanelles. This process is now continued and the smallest reference to the plan removed.

\(^{4}\) The World Crisis, p. 721.
It should be noted that this description is not quite accurate. Between Sedd-el-Bahr and Cape Hellas the only sections where the cliffs could really be described as precipitous are opposite the Anzac landing place and for a mile or so to the north of Y beach. All the other areas have suitable landing places and especially the beaches south of Gaba Tepe where, it was suggested, Hamilton might have landed. However, in an early draft of this chapter Churchill had continued the passage quoted above by saying "It [the Peninsula] is traversed by few roads, but the tracks are numerous and, in general, it is practicable in all directions for the movement and manoeuvres of troops". This is hardly an accurate description of Gallipoli, the country to the north being particularly unsuitable for the activities described by Churchill. Even the ground at the southern end of the peninsula is much more broken and difficult than would appear from a map and the narrowness of the Peninsula at this end represents particular difficulties for manoeuvring large numbers of men. Presumably this sentence was removed on the advice of Hamilton or Aspinall or someone who knew the Peninsula. However, it is important in indicating what an erroneous view of the nature of the Gallipoli terrain was held by Churchill and no doubt by other members of the War Council. It was perhaps this factor that gave some of Churchill's strategic suggestions for the operation such a theoretical character. Certainly many of them seemed to be inspired by merely measuring lines on a map without taking the nature of the country into account.

Hamilton's plan is described by Churchill thus. "[It] comprised two main converging attacks on the Southern End of the Peninsula ... Both these attacks would have become related in the event of either making substantial progress." In fact the two attacks were not converging. As originally

(2) "The World Crisis, p. 725."
planned they were at right angles to each other. As modified by Birdwood, when he decided to concentrate on Sari Bair they were diverging, the main Anzac thrust being made to the north east. Even if successful the attacks would not really have become related to one another, except that a successful attack in the north would have made the position of enemy troops in the south precarious. However, provided the northern attack was held up, even a substantial gains in the south, to Achi Baba or beyond, would have made no contribution to easing the pressure on the Anzacs. This was in fact one of the drawbacks in landing two forces so far apart that they were unrelated to each other. But Churchill, perhaps relying on Hamilton's despatches, does not draw this conclusion.

The landings at Hellas are described by Churchill in his usual vivid and compelling prose. Of the landing at V beach he says,

"As the Irish troops rushed from the hold of the River Clyde, or as the boats reached the submerged barbed wire, an annihilating fire burst upon them from all parts of the small amphitheatre. The boats were checked by the wire or by the destruction of their rowers. The lighters, swayed by the current, were with difficulty placed and kept in position. In a few minutes more than half of those who had exposed themselves were shot down. The boats, the lighters, the ganeways, the water, and the edge of the beach were heaped or crowded with dead and dying."\(^1\)

Yet despite this graphic description Churchill makes no mention of the naval bombardment of the beaches. It was seen earlier that this bombardment was ineffective, most of the defenders remaining untouched, and that this was a major cause in the breakdown of the plan. The comment was also made that Hamilton seemed to be aware of the fact that naval shells could not destroy wire and trenches but did nothing to alter his plan, leaving his most important landing covered by the fire of only one ship. Yet none of these important points is discussed in *The World Crisis*.

A further point is that the account of the landings is purely descriptive. There is no analysis of what went wrong or why. For example, after describing the carnage on V beach Churchill does not question the

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\(^1\) *The World Crisis*, p. 727.
reason which led Hamilton to make his "most important" landing at this point. Nor does he comment on the use made of the contingents landed at S and Y beaches. It was suggested earlier that rather too much has been made of these "lost opportunities" but one would not expect Churchill to avoid altogether such a controversy. Similarly at X beach Churchill records that the landing was made with relative ease but does not draw attention to the fact that these troops remained virtually inactive for 3 days, while the exhausted survivors of W and V beaches made costly frontal attacks on Sedd-el-Bahr.

One explanation for Churchill's treatment of the landings at Hellas is that he perhaps felt a full disclosure would be embarrassing to Hamilton. It has been shown that Hamilton was open to criticism in his handling of the V beach landing and over the failure to overrule Hunter-Weston and direct troops to Y beach. After the war Hamilton followed closely the writing of this section of The World Crisis and Churchill even asked him to contribute a piece on V beach. Whether this was incorporated into the book, is not known for no copy of Hamilton's contribution seems to have survived.

Perhaps another explanation is that, under the influence of Hamilton and Aspinall, Churchill did not realize the deficiencies and areas of controversy surrounding the landing. Hamilton certainly regarded the feat of establishing a beachhead as proof that his plan had succeeded. In this atmosphere, and relying as he did on Hamilton and Aspinall to provide much of the documentation, it is perhaps not surprising that Churchill's account reads like one of Hamilton's despatches.

Churchill's description of the Anzac landing is more satisfactory than his handling of the southern battles. His explanation of why the troops landed in the wrong place, that the boats missed their direction

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(1) The World Crisis, p. 727.
(2) Ibid., p. 728.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Hamilton to Churchill 28/6/23, Churchill Papers 8/44.
in the dark, would probably not be accepted now, but when Churchill was writing many aspects of the controversy were unknown.

To explain the failure of the landing Churchill fixes on the rapid deployment of the Turkish reserves by Mustapha Kemel. There is no doubt that this is an incident full of drama - the future nationalist leader emerging at this early date as the saviour of his country. However, Churchill has probably made too much of this incident. Kemel's 57th. Regiment only came into action late on the 25th. Certainly it played a major part in parrying further progress along the Sari Bair ridge. However, it was suggested earlier that by this time the plan had already failed. The difficult nature of the ground, the confusion caused by landing in the wrong place and the ambitious nature of the original objectives had already played their part. The fact is that from the dawn landing until 4.30 p.m. on the 25th. the Anzac troops were faced with very few Turkish defenders but they were still unable to make substantial advances and it was only at the end of this period that Kemel and his men became a serious factor in the defence.

Only the briefest account is given in The World Crisis of the events from April 26th. to the 28th. at Hellas and Churchill does not investigate the local factors which affected the rate and progress of the advances. This could be justified on the grounds that no matter what plan had been made by Hamilton on the 26th., he did not have troops, either in fighting condition or in enough numbers, to carry it through to victory. Churchill's solution to Hamilton's dilemma is simple.

"If, during the 28th. and 29th., two or three fresh divisions of French, British, or Indian troops could have been thrown in, the Turkish defence must have been broken and the decisive positions would have fallen into our hands [but]...Where was the extra Army Corps that was needed? It existed. It was destined for the struggle. It was doomed to suffer fearful losses in that struggle. But now when its presence would have given certain victory, it stood idle in Egypt or England."4

(1) The World Crisis, p. 729.
(2) Ibid., p. 730.
(3) Ibid., p. 732-3.
(4) Ibid., 733 emphasis added.
Like so much of Churchill's writing about Gallipoli this passage ignores logistic factors which Van Creveld has noted are often basic to military strategy but are so often ignored by military historians because they make little appeal to the imagination.¹ This seems to be the case with Churchill. As has been shown, it is doubtful if one division could have landed in time for the battles at the end of April and early May. It is certain that this feat would have been impossible for the two or three divisions specified by Churchill. Furthermore, although in time the Navy might have been able to collect enough small craft to land these divisions, it would have been necessary to land them in relays, thus doubling or trebling the time taken for their deployment. And once the divisions were ashore it is by no means certain that the Navy with the small craft available would have been able to supply a total of 6 or 7 divisions in the early stages of the campaign, or if a rapid advance commenced whether ammunition could have been supplied in sufficient quantities to a front line miles from the beaches. There is also an error of fact in the passage quoted. Churchill implies that there was an army corps "standing idle" in Egypt. This was not the case. The force in question consisted of one territorial division and a brigade, that is 1-1/3rd. divisions. This force then was the maximum number of troops available to reinforce Hamilton from Egypt.

It is revealed in the Churchill papers that The World Crisis originally included a note of criticism of Hamilton at this point. In place of the section underlined above Churchill had initially written "Unhappily we too had exhausted our reserves, and no preparation had been made before the attack to use at this moment the large numbers of troops which already stood idle in Egypt."² It is indeed a fair criticism of Hamilton to suggest that he was in error in not having a force on hand to follow up in

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² Churchill Papers 8/148.
the event of a stalemate. (Whether the reinforcement would have proved
decisive is another matter; reserves are usually regarded as essential to
any battle.) This criticism of Hamilton was then removed and the passage
above substituted. The differences between the two passages should be
noticed for they are good examples of Churchill's skillful use of language.
The phrase in the final version, "it stood idle in Egypt or England"
carries none of the criticism of Hamilton implied by the earlier "no
preparation has been made". In fact the inclusion of England would possibly
indicate that the home authorities (i.e. Kitchener) were partly to blame.
Thus both these amendments direct attention away from Hamilton.

A final point that should be made on the passage quoted is that
Churchill claims that in the event of success, the "decisive positions would
have fallen into our hands". By this he can only mean Achi Baba, for even
the most optimistic observer could not have supposed that the Straits
could be reached in one bound from the line reached on the 28th. Yet it
has been shown that the Achi Baba position was not the key to the peninsula.
It was not even a good observation point from which to direct the fire
of the fleet for no view over the narrows was to be had from the summit.
In fact the capture of Achi Baba would have only been the beginning of the
assault on the Kilid Bahr Plateau, an even more formidable undertaking.

Concerning the question of reinforcements for Hamilton's force,
Churchill reproaches Kitchener for his slow response in releasing
additional troops. However, as has been shown, there is another side to
this question and that is Hamilton's reluctance to ask for the troops
available in Egypt and the qualifications and hesitations contained in
Hamilton's requests when they did arrive. In fact this point should have
been obvious to Churchill as he had consulted the Hamilton-Kitchener
correspondence before writing this section of The World Crisis.  

(1) See Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.1, p. 347 and p. 337N1.
(2) Churchill has a brief account of the so called second battle of
Krithia which although accurate enough is very much astray concerning
the numbers engaged, the 50,000 British and French troops claimed in
The World Crisis (p. 735) were probably no more than 20,000.
The opening pages of the next chapter of *The World Crisis* are devoted to a description of the effect of the landing abroad and at home.

"In spite of the fact that the Army was brought to a standstill, the great event of the landing continued to produce its impression throughout Europe. Italy, Greece, Roumania, Bulgaria assumed that now that large allied forces were definitely ashore, they could and would be reinforced from the sea until the Turkish resistance was overcome. The Italian momentum towards war proceeded unchecked; and the Balkan States continued in an attitude of strained expectancy."  

As far as Italy is concerned, Churchill is probably correct. Certainly the date of the signing of the Treaty of London, which brought Italy into the war, is suggestive. This was also the opinion of Headlam-Morley, Churchill's contact at the Foreign Office. It is hard to see that Churchill's claim in relation to the other Balkan States is justified. It will be remembered that the actions of these countries suggested that they remained unimpressed by British activity at the Dardanelles. In any case their enthusiasm must have been short lived because of the stalemate on the peninsula and it is certain that this situation, despite Churchill's assurances in *The World Crisis* impressed no one.

As for domestic reaction, Churchill describes how the Conservatives "advised by high authorities in France" expected Hamilton would fail to gain a foothold and that, "when these predictions were falsified", there was a "corresponding easement of tension". In the first version of this passage Churchill had not hesitated to name the chief adviser of the Conservatives as Sir Henry Wilson and the passage read "advised by Sir Henry Wilson and other high authorities." Churchill was of course correct. Wilson had prepared a paper for Bonar Law showing that the operation would fail. However, Churchill had finished the war as an admirer of Wilson

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(1) *The World Crisis*, p. 736.  
(2) Headlam-Morley to Churchill 29/6/23, Churchill Papers 8/44.  
(3) *The World Crisis*, p. 736.  
(4) Ibid.  
(5) Churchill Papers 8/149.  
and the two men had worked together closely while Churchill was at the War Office. Perhaps on these grounds Churchill considered that this example of Wilson's behaviour towards the elected government should go unrecorded. After describing domestic reaction to the April landings Churchill turns to a discussion of the problem of whether to renew the naval attack. In our earlier discussion of de Robeck's telegram of May 10th, concerning the renewal of the naval attack, it was suggested that it was fairly clear that the Admiral deprecated a further attempt by the Fleet. In The World Crisis, Churchill contends that in this telegram de Robeck "intimated unmistakably his readiness to make the attempt if the Admiralty gave the order".¹ This seems to be a very optimistic view of de Robeck's message. Certainly the question of what he would do if ordered is left open, but the phrasing of the telegram seems to have been constructed to prevent that situation ever arising. In other words, de Robeck made it clear that he would have to be ordered to renew the attack against his better judgment and was no doubt confident that the Admiralty War Group would uphold him as they had after March 22nd. In fact there is evidence that Churchill realized that, in the form in was received, the telegram prevented further action. In a draft of The World Crisis he wrote "The telegram drafted by Keyes was considerably modified and neutralized before it was sent".² However, in keeping with the line he pursued at the time, that the telegram did offer the prospect of a renewal of the naval attack, he later deleted this passage and published "The telegram bears the imprint of several hands and of opposite opinions".³ This also had the added advantage of concealing that the "opposite opinions" and "other hands" referred to belonged to Keyes. Furthermore, by the time he came to write The World Crisis, Churchill seemed to agree that de Robeck had been right.

¹ The World Crisis, p. 743.
² Churchill Papers 8/149 emphasis added.
³ The World Crisis, p. 742.
In a first draft of the chapter he concluded by saying that "the arguments against decisive naval action were conclusive". However, as he realized, his position at the time had been that some sort of naval attempt should have been made, so he deleted "conclusive" and substituted the less prohibitive "very weighty".

Other sections of this part of The World Crisis were much altered before publication. In the published version those at the Dardanelles pressing de Robeck to renew the naval attack are identified only as "the forward school". In fact, as might be suspected from the earlier discussion, Churchill originally had "Keyes". In the following paragraph therefore "Keyes" should be substituted for "they".

"They had no doubt whatever that the Fleet could make its way through into the Marmora. They had continually impressed upon the Admiral the duty of the Navy to attempt this task. Grieved beyond measure at the cruel losses that the Army had sustained, out of all proportion to anything expected, they felt it almost unendurable that the Navy should sit helpless and inactive after the orders they had received and the undertakings made on their behalf. They therefore pressed their Chief to propose to the Admiralty the renewal of the naval attack." Originally Churchill had also included Wemyss with "forward school". At the end of the first paragraph on p. 742 he had at first written "These Councils were reinforced by Admiral Wemyss who, throughout the whole of these operations and as will be seen down to the very end, was unswerving in his conviction that the fleet ought to try and confident that they would succeed".

This paragraph is a good example of how Churchill continually over-estimated the support that the purely naval operation had among the higher ranks of the Navy. It is true that in November and December 1915 Wemyss

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(1) Churchill Papers 8/87.
(2) The World Crisis, p. 745.
(3) Ibid., p. 741.
(4) Churchill Papers 8/86.
(6) Ibid., p. 742.
became convinced that before evacuation was decided on the Fleet should make another attempt to force the Straits. However, in March it will be remembered that he strongly approved of de Robeck's decision to halt the naval attack and wait for the Army. As far as May is concerned there is no indication in Weymess' memoirs or in his correspondence with the Admiralty and de Robeck that he had altered this view. It is extremely doubtful, therefore, if Weymss could at this stage be classified in the "forward school" and the belated realization of this fact may have led Churchill to delete the sentence.

Churchill's discussion of his attempts to convince Fisher that a positive reply should be sent to de Robeck suffers from two main defects. The first is that Churchill has still not realized that the only operation open to the Fleet, due to the shortage of ammunition, was to rush the Straits. He therefore prints Fisher's memorandum of May 11th. deprecating a rush¹ and his own reply beginning "You will never receive from me any proposition to 'rush' the Dardanelles".² He then says that all he wanted "was the sweeping of the Kephez minefield under cover of a renewed engagement of the forts at the Narrows",³ which would also "test the reports which we had received about the shortage of ammunition".⁴ Obviously he has not grasped the fact that such a limited operation was hardly possible and that the only shortage of ammunition it would have revealed was that in the fleet. The second point to be made is that Churchill's contention that he was only pressing Fisher to sanction a limited operation of the type mentioned above is not borne out by the documents. His reply to Fisher of May 11th. which is printed in The World Crisis does not specifically repudiate ordering de Robeck to launch a large

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¹ (1) The World Crisis, p. 746-8.
² (2) Ibid., p. 748.
³ (3) Ibid., p. 745.
⁴ (4) Ibid.
operation against the narrows,\(^1\) a point noticed by Fisher at the time. However, Churchill is forced to admit that a successful limited operation would have only strengthened the case for the main thrust,\(^2\) thus virtually conceding Fisher's argument.

The most interesting material on Fisher in this chapter of *The World Crisis* is Churchill's description of the First Sea Lord's physical and mental state in what was to be his last week in office.

"I could see" Churchill wrote,

..."that Lord Fisher was under considerable strain. His seventy-four years lay heavy upon him. During my absence in Paris upon the negotiations for the Anglo-Italian Naval Convention, he had shown great nervous exhaustion. He had evinced unconcealed distress and anxiety at being left alone in sole charge of the Admiralty. There is no doubt that the old Admiral was worried almost out of his wits by the immense pressure of the times and by the course events had taken."\(^3\)

Thus we have a picture of Fisher on the verge of collapse. However, the Churchill papers reveal an even more alarming situation, that of the First Sea Lord being incapable of performing his duties. In the section quoted above Churchill had originally included, "The Chief of the Staff had found difficulty in securing from him the necessary signatures for such action as had to be taken. On more than one occasion his Confidential Secretary (Captain Crease) had written the essential initials himself".\(^4\) Thus the man whom Churchill had watched "narrowly" to judge his "physical strength and mental alertness" and about whom he had concluded that "there seemed no doubt about either",\(^5\) is revealed as a shattered wreck, incapable of carrying out the simplest functions of his high office. No doubt Churchill decided to conceal the full truth about Fisher's state, to protect the reputation of the old Admiral, but it must be admitted that this also had the effect of concealing the magnitude of Churchill's mistake.

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(1) *The World Crisis*, p. 748-9.
(2) Ibid., p. 745.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Churchill Papers 8/149. The passage should be inserted after the sentence ending "in sole charge of the Admiralty" on p. 745.
(5) *The World Crisis*, p. 360.
in re-installing him at the Admiralty and later pleading with him to come back.

Churchill devotes an entire chapter of The World Crisis to the May political crisis in Britain. He opens his account with a discussion of the War Council of May 14th. Churchill describes the mood of the Committee as "sulphurous" which, considering the acrimonious debate between Kitchener, Churchill and Fisher concerning the withdrawal of the Queen Elizabeth and the failure of the army at Gallipoli to advance, seems a reasonable conclusion. After correctly summarizing Kitchener's statement he moves on to his own reply, making the point that "if it had been known three months before that an army of from 80,000 to 100,000 men would be available in May for an attack on the Dardanelles, the attack by the Navy alone would never have been undertaken." He does not elaborate on this statement, thus giving the impression that such an army could have been provided and that Kitchener was to blame that it was not. However, as has been suggested, in February there had been no proposal from Churchill that the naval attack should be delayed until troops were available. His statement in The World Crisis also ignores the fact that in February he had given repeated assurances that an army would not be required.

The resignation of Fisher is dealt with differently in some important ways in the earlier editions of The World Crisis than the edition used here and they should briefly be noted. Originally Churchill believed that it was a telegram assigning four cruisers to work with the Italian Fleet marked "First Sea Lord to see after action" that had been "the spark that fired the train". Later after correspondence with Crease he realized that it was the additions made to the list of ships for the Dardanelles on a minute.

(1) The World Crisis, p. 754.
(2) Ibid., p. 755.
(3) Ibid (1st Edition) p. 358. Churchill was only prepared to admit in The World Crisis that the additions to this minute concerned submarines. Crease claimed that Churchill also added to the number of monitors to be sent.
of May 14th. That was the real cause. Churchill incorporated most of the new information into the later editions of The World Crisis, one of the few occasions in which he substantially revised a section of his work. Although The World Crisis may initially have been misleading one some of the details associated with Fisher's resignation, from the first Churchill accurately represented the reason behind the resignation of the First Sea Lord. In the first edition of the book Churchill states that what had caused Fisher's resignation was the fact that he "was compelled by arguments and pressures he had never been able to resist, but had never ceased to resent, to become responsible for operations to which he had taken an intense dislike".

Turning to Churchill's handling of the resignation crisis, little need be said of his account of events of the 15th. of May which is quite accurate and covers all the important incidents. For May 16th. he prints the inconclusive exchange of letters between himself and Fisher. He then turns his attention to the Junior Sea Lords. Initially he had intended to publish his letter to them of May 17th. repudiating their criticism that movements of the Fleet had been taken out of the hands of the First Sea

(1) Arthur Marder in Scapa Flow V.2, p. 278 says that Fisher was confronted by four Minutes from Churchill on May 15th. He then says "They called for reinforcements considerably in excess of what had been apparently agreed". This gives the impression that all four minutes were concerned with reinforcements for the Dardanelles. In fact only two were - the remaining two dealing with future operations of the Harwich Force and the question of whether an armoured cruiser squadron should be sent to the Humber. See Fear God V.3, p. 222-226.

(2) The World Crisis, p. 761.

(3) For example Fisher's resignation letter is published, as is Asquith's order summoning Fisher to return to his post and Churchill's personal plea to Fisher. However from the latter message Churchill states that he wrote, "In order to bring you back to the Admiralty I took my political life in my hands - as you know well". (P. 763) However, it will be remembered that the original said, "I took my political life in my hands with the King and the Prime Minister". Churchill thus conceals that he had to do battle with the monarchy as well as with his political colleagues to have Fisher reinstated, a fact that is also excluded from the chapter dealing with the return of Fisher in Volume 1. (See p. 360) As a consequence of this omission Churchill is also forced to omit the words "with the King and Prime Minister" from the corresponding section of Fisher's reply of May 16th. (p. 765)

(4) The World Crisis, p. 765-6.
Lord, their reply reaffirming their criticism, and his further letter maintaining his original view. It cannot be said that these omissions are very important but it should be noticed that Churchill apparently never intended to publish the Sea Lords' original letter criticizing his actions and largely blaming him for Fisher's resignation.

On the question of whether the Sea Lords would resign with Fisher Churchill states that Sir Arthur Wilson "had informed them that it was their duty to remain at their posts" and that he later informed Asquith that "the other Members of the Board would remain". It was stated earlier, however, that the Sea Lords seem to have made their own acceptance of Churchill conditional upon the return of Fisher. At this stage, therefore, it is probable that they were merely indicating that they would remain until Fisher's position was resolved one way or another. Therefore the two statements made by Churchill are somewhat misleading although they are carefully worded to avoid the statement that the Sea Lords' stay would be permanent.

Churchill's movements for the remainder of the 16th. and for most of the 17th. as detailed in The World Crisis are difficult to verify. But there seems no reason to doubt his account of the meeting with Asquith at the Wharf later on the 16th, or of his meetings with Lloyd George and Asquith the next day. There has been some controversy over his claim in The World Crisis that he rejected the Colonial Office when it was offered to him by Asquith. Beaverbrook states that he accepted it. However, it will be remembered that Churchill wrote to Asquith on the 18th. accepting the Colonial Office if it was still open to him, a clear indication that he had already rejected it. Where Churchill's version of events is open to question is concerning his statement that after meeting Asquith "I saw at

(1) Churchill Papers 8/150.
(2) The World Crisis, p. 767.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid., p. 768.
once that it was decided that I should leave the Admiralty". It has been shown earlier that this did not seem to be the case and that for some time after this Churchill clung to the hope that he would remain in charge of the navy. Even a letter to Asquith published in The World Crisis indicates that he did not consider that Asquith's decision was final. However, that letter has not been quoted in full. It was noted that the gratuitous advice offered by Churchill to Asquith in the letter ("L.G. will not do for W.O." etc.) was a measure of how little Churchill had realized that his own fortunes had undergone a disastrous reversal. In The World Crisis this section of the letter is omitted, thus in part preserving the impression that Churchill had accepted his fate, but perhaps more importantly concealing from Lloyd George the fact that Churchill thought him unsuitable to be War Minister.

For the 17th, Churchill also includes a full account of the preliminary moves of the impending sea battle, the dramatic effect being heightened by the publication of the most important telegrams which passed between the Admiralty and Jellicoe. Indeed, considering the inconsequential nature of the event rather too much has been published but Churchill achieves the effect of contrasting the real business of running the war with the rather sordid trading for office which was proceeding around him.

In fact Churchill was not as far removed from this latter process as his account would have us believe and from this point his narrative of his own part in the fall of the government becomes much less reliable. The general line he takes is that by the 18th, he had accepted with dignity his removal from office and that from then on he remained rather aloof from political manoeuvring. It was indicated in the first part of this chapter

(1) The World Crisis, p. 768.
(2) Ibid., p. 771.
(3) Churchill Papers 8/150.
(4) The World Crisis, p. 769-72.
(5) Ibid., p. 772 and 776.
that this was by no means the case and that in a series of letters to Asquith and the Conservative leaders Churchill desperately tried to cling to office. Initially, as the Churchill papers reveal, a much franker version of these events was to have been given in *The World Crisis* but then some of the more revealing letters were omitted. We have already seen that Churchill removed his exchange of letters with the Sea Lords and an important section of his letter to Asquith of May 17th. Now, in his account of events of the 18th, he omits altogether a further letter to the Prime Minister asking to be kept on in office, though it was his original intention to include it. Then on the 19th, in his discussion of Wilson's letter to Asquith indicating that he would serve under no other First Lord, Churchill originally wrote that this information was not made public but "I could not, however, forbear writing to Mr. Asquith the letter which I do not hesitate to print below". This letter, it will be remembered, stated that Churchill was confident that he could continue in office supported by Wilson and the other members of the board. In the outcome Churchill did hesitate to print it and it was not included in the published version of *The World Crisis*. Also excluded were Asquith's letter to Churchill of the 20th saying that it was settled that Churchill should leave the Admiralty and a further letter from the Prime Minister saying how delighted he was that Churchill had accepted the situation. The inclusion of these letters in *The World Crisis* would have helped to clarify Churchill's reactions to the crisis. However it should be noted that he never intended to print his letter of the 21st to Asquith which claimed that only he and Wilson were capable of effectively running the Admiralty or his further letter of the same day accepting office "even the lowest". These letters are quite crucial, and without them it is hard

(1) Churchill Papers 8/150. The letter was to be included at the end of the first paragraph on p. 772.
(2) Ibid. The correspondence was to be included after the sentence ending "Disclosed to the public" on p. 774.
(3) Ibid.
to gauge the extent of Churchill's attempt to cling to the Admiralty or his chastened mood when that office was denied him.

There are other omissions from this section. None of Churchill's correspondence with the Conservative leadership is published and indeed Bonar Law's name does not occur anywhere in the chapter. Churchill does include an oblique attack on the makers of the coalition from all parties by stating that it is in the House of Commons that governments should be made and that the House had a right to be consulted on this occasion.¹

However, the Churchill papers disclose that it had originally been his intention to include an attack on Bonar Law. No doubt in the intervening years Churchill had discovered the role played by the Conservative leader in excluding him from the Admiralty and his rebuke (in the form of a footnote) was to have read "Three times" said Mr. Bonar Law speaking at Glasgow during the recent election

"have I taken the responsibility of breaking up a Government."

It is quite true & it is also true that in each case the House of Commons was not consulted, that the action took place behind closed doors & in secret negotiations & that the weapon was throughout the strong partisanship of the Conservative party wh never rested till it had driven from power every Liberal Ministry. Let us hope that the results of the latest of these palace revolutions will be less disastrous to the state than those wh attended the first."²

Thus is laid bare Churchill's real opinion of the formation and composition of the first wartime coalition. Why was this section deleted? As will be seen in a later chapter Beaverbrook was successful in getting Churchill to moderate criticisms of Bonar Law in the third volume of The World Crisis and he may have played a similar role here although written evidence is lacking. However, it is likely that the footnote was removed to maintain the rather aloof and dignified tone adopted by Churchill towards domestic

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¹ The World Crisis, p. 775.
² Churchill Papers 8/150. The "recent" election probably refers to the 1922 General Election after which Bonar Law became Prime Minister. The "three times" refers to the formation of the 1st. and 2nd. wartime coalitions and the demise of Lloyd George in 1922, which is also the "palace revolution" referred to. In 1922 Churchill was Colonial Secretary in the Lloyd George Coalition. The "palace revolution" lost him his Cabinet post, the ensuing General Election his parliamentary seat.
politics and clashes of personality. The impression he seems to be anxious
to convey is that he was above the sordid party battle. Perhaps he also
hoped that this approach would give his book a more detached and scholarly
appearance. We have seen him adopt this method before in relation to
important naval figures. A more obvious reason for the deletion is that
Churchill probably was not anxious that the harsh indictment of the
Conservative party should become public. During the time that elapsed
between the writing of this section (probably in 1922) and the publication
of the second volume of _The World Crisis_ in 1923, Churchill had moved much
closer to the Conservatives. He was to rejoin the party in 1924. Clearly
a statement condemning the party as irresponsibly partisan, and decidedly
pro-Liberal in inclination, would not have furthered his cause.

Churchill also attempts to take a detached view of the role of Asquith
in the crisis. He does make the point that the Prime Minister supported
all the actions taken at the Dardanelles but that Churchill well understood
his difficulties during the crisis and "there never was and never has been
the slightest personal recrimination upon the subject".¹ In fact, as
Martin Gilbert shows Churchill resented Asquith's role in the crisis very
much and was very bitter over what he saw as Asquith's failure to support
his Dardanelles policy. Before the end of the year he was referring
to "That odious Asquith, & his pack of incompetents and intriguers".²

The last major omission from this section is Churchill's amazing
offer on the 19th. of a cabinet post to Fisher. This is of course further
evidence of the frantic attempts by Churchill to remain at the Admiralty
and his silence on this point is hardly surprising.

The contrast between Churchill's opinion of Sir Arthur Wilson in 1911 and
in 1915 has already been noted. In _The World Crisis_ Wilson's decision to

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¹ _The World Crisis_, p. 774.
² Churchill to his wife 11/12/15, quoted in Gilbert M., _Winston S.
Churchill V.3_, p. 607.
serve only under Churchill is represented by Churchill as a possible turning point in his fortunes had the news been made public by Asquith. He writes,

"I knew well the profound impression which Sir Arthur Wilson's action, had it been made public, would have produced upon the Naval Service. It would instantly have restored the confidence which press attacks, impossible to answer, had undermined. In no other way could the persistent accusations of rash, ignorant interference by the civilian Minister in the naval conduct of the war be decisively repelled."1

No statement could be at such variance with the facts, although it is probably true that Churchill was never aware of the depth of feeling against Wilson in the Service. It will be remembered that Jellicoe, the only man who really counted regarding opinion afloat, considered Wilson a menace. The knowledge that Wilson was prepared to serve under no one but Churchill therefore weakened Churchill's position rather than strengthened it and although it is possible that publication of Wilson's letter might have raised Churchill's standing with the public this would have counted for nothing in the prevailing political atmosphere.

In relation to these chapters of The World Crisis two descriptions by Churchill of conditions on the Western Front should be noticed. The earlier passage is a description of trenches in Belgium visited by Churchill on the 18th. of March. "Corpses entangled in the wire were covered with seaweed and washed by the tides as they mouldered. Others in groups of ten or twelve lay at the foot of the sandhills blasted in their charge but with / sense and aspect of attack still eloquent in their attitude and order. These dead had lain there for months."2 The second passage occurs in the chapter on the April 25th. landings and the subsequent fighting where Churchill includes a brief sketch of a casualty clearing station which he visited about this time. "More than 1,000 men suffering

(1) The World Crisis, p. 773-4.
(2) Ibid., p. 643.
from every form of horrible injury, seared, torn, pierced, choking, dying, were being sorted according to their miseries." 1 He goes on to describe the activities of a burial party, a room full of men who were beyond help and "the terrible spectacle of a man being trepanned." 2

The juxtaposition of these passages with descriptions of the Gallipoli battles can hardly be an unconscious exercise. Perhaps to offset his vivid description of the V beach landing Churchill is reminding his readers that great as was the carnage at Hellas it was as nothing to what was happening in France. The passages, however, also illuminate a facet of Churchill more to his credit. The vividness with which he is able to recall these terrible scenes is an indication of the deep impression which war, as fought in 1915, made upon him, and of the horror with which he regarded it. His frequent visits to France in 1914 had made him aware, perhaps more than any other Cabinet Minister, of the type of war that was being fought and it is possible that the wish to avoid the sordid nature of trench warfare and return to a cleaner war of movement and action may have played a part in his search for a theatre of war away from the Western Front.

In considering the chapters of The World Crisis under discussion one is struck by the extremely theoretical nature of Churchill's comments on military events and the way in which difficulties and problems disappear under the broad sweep of his pen. Thus in his discussion of the controversy surrounding the late despatch and disorganized state of the 29th. Division, such mundane but vital factors as the weather, and the relationship between the tactical loading of ships and the state of the plan are ignored. It is also assumed that troops can be "thrown in" (a splendidly vague phrase) to action over open beaches with the minimum of preparation. The same feature reoccurs later in the chapter when additional divisions, always sufficient to turn the scale, are manoeuvred

(1) The World Crisis, p. 739.
(2) Ibid.
by Churchill like chess pieces without any consideration for the hard and, seemingly, often intractible logistic problems which would have accompanied their utilization.

However, at least the introduction of these controversies into *The World Crisis* makes Churchill's account lively and often stimulating. In comparison his description of the military operations is a great disappoint-ment. One feels that the many contentious points raised concerning especially the Hellas landing would have been ideally suited to a Churchillian dissection. Instead merely a bland narrative is provided. Apparently Churchill's close association with Hamilton and Aspinall led him either to ignore, or be oblivious to, the major controversies. In this instance the disadvantages of the participant historian are clearly seen.

Three themes, already noted in earlier chapters, have been carried forward into this section of *The World Crisis*. First and second are the misrepresentation of the attitudes of Fisher and de Robeck towards the operation; the third is the effect that Gallipoli supposedly had on the Balkans. Given the rationale for the operation set out in *The World Crisis* great effects must be produced on the states of south eastern Europe by the landings even when supporting evidence for this fact is extremely hard to find. The line followed with de Robeck (that previously the Admiralty had been willing to renew the attack and the Admiral reluctant; and that in May these positions were reversed) is neat and fits well into Churchill's "chain of fate" theory. However, it is inaccurate. After March 18th. de Robeck was never in favour of renewing the naval attack. Fisher deserves slightly longer consideration. As has been suggested, Churchill often made no real attempt to discover the root cause of Fisher's dislike of the Dardanelles operation but that dislike was often expressed in such an oblique and contradictory manner that Churchill could be excused for thinking at times that his actions had the full support of the old Admiral. However, during this period the situation is somewhat
different. For once Fisher seems to have expressed his attitude quite clearly. He desperately wanted the War Council to reconsider the whole operation and he stated this quite unequivocally to Churchill on several occasions. There seems little excuse for the way in which Churchill has glossed over this fact in *The World Crisis*.

Churchill's description of the political crisis can be divided into two sections. His handling of Fisher's resignation and events up to May 17th. is adequate and he clearly states that it was the continual pressure which he placed on Fisher to support the Dardanelles operation that caused his resignation. However after the 17th. Churchill's narrative is unreliable. In this section Churchill writes from the point of view of a detached spectator of the sordid political manoeuvrings. To this end bitter criticisms of Bonar Law are omitted and Churchill's true feelings towards Asquith disguised. No doubt Churchill would have argued that this method enabled him to construct a more impartial narrative and to a certain extent distance himself from the events described. Partly this effect has been achieved. Churchill's account is largely free from personal animosity. But it has been achieved at a cost. The extent to which Churchill attempted to cling to office has been concealed and vital documents which would have revealed this fact to the reader have been omitted. As has been noticed before in *The World Crisis*, the detachment of the historian conceals the fallibility of the politician.
THE DARDANELLES IV: JUNE-AUGUST 1915

After the failure of the second battle of Krithia Hamilton took stock of the situation. It was grim. The heavy losses sustained since April 25th. meant that his force was short by over 25,000 men and almost 1,000 officers.\(^1\) The 29th. Division had been reduced to half its strength.\(^2\) Moreover, until the 11th. of May only 867 replacements had been despatched from Britain\(^3\) although 12,000 had been requested.\(^4\) Ammunition was also short and Hamilton could hardly have been encouraged by a War Office minute which instructed him that his supply "was never calculated on the basis of a prolonged occupation of the Gallipoli peninsula. It is important to push on."\(^5\) The trouble was that without ammunition and fresh drafts Hamilton could not push on. Yet when Kitchener asked him what his requirements were on May 15th.\(^6\) Hamilton replied (May 17th.) that at the present there was insufficient room on the Peninsula for more men. But he did go on to say that when further advances were made to create the space necessary for their deployment he considered two Army Corps would be needed to finish the task.\(^7\) He did not even suggest that fresh drafts to replace his losses should be expedited. By framing his reply in this way Hamilton clearly removed some of the urgency from the situation. Furthermore he made repeated assurances that he would do the best with the troops available\(^8\) and that progress was being made every day.\(^9\) It was not until June 2nd, and then only under pressure from his staff,\(^10\) that Hamilton reminded Kitchener he had received no reply to his telegram of May 17th.\(^11\) In reply, Kitchener

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\(^{(1)}\) Dardanelles Commission, "M.E.F. Weekly Returns" Cab. 19/31.
\(^{(2)}\) Minute by General deLisle 31/7/15, Kitchener Papers, Pro 30/57/62.
\(^{(3)}\) Its strength on May 30th. was 6,025 men and 204 officers compared with 11,931 men and 342 officers on April 24th.
\(^{(4)}\) Reinforcements for 29th. Division, W.O. 162/69.
\(^{(5)}\) Hamilton to W.O. 13/5/15, Hamilton Papers, 15/17.
\(^{(7)}\) Kitchener to Hamilton 15/5/15, W.O. 159/13.
\(^{(8)}\) Hamilton to Kitchener 17/5/15, in Ibid.
\(^{(9)}\) Hamilton to Kitchener 18/5/15, in Ibid.
\(^{(10)}\) Hamilton to Kitchener 19/5/15, in Ibid.
\(^{(11)}\) Diary of Captain Deedes and comments by Dawnay, Dawnay Papers, Imperial War Museum, London, Box 18.
reminded Hamilton that the point about having insufficient room to deploy larger numbers of troops still applied and that with such limited space he doubted if a decision could be reached with any number of reinforcements. However, he asked Hamilton to restate his needs. Hamilton once more refused to commit himself, now arguing that he must wait until after the result of the next "push was known". It has been stated that the only cause of the delay in providing Hamilton with reinforcements was the May political crisis in England. Obviously the Government being in disarray did not make decision making any easier. However, as the above correspondence should make clear, a fundamental problem was the reluctance of Hamilton to state his requirements and his making them dependent on further progress. This last fact made Kitchener reluctant to send reinforcements until he saw if further progress could be made, a point on which he was clearly sceptical. Obviously however, his decision making power was not paralysed by the political crisis for it was during this period that he sent the 52nd. Division to Hamilton. In these circumstances it is hard to believe that a forceful request from Hamilton would not have been met by at least the despatch of an additional division by Kitchener and in these circumstances the fact that no substantial reinforcements were received by Hamilton until July was as much his own fault as that of the politicians.

Hamilton's "push", the Third Battle of Krithia, was launched on July 4th. Approximately 30,000 British and French troops attacked an almost equal number of Turks. On the flanks, the attack failed, but in the centre the Manchester Territorials captured the two Turkish lines that were their objectives and even managed to place three companies beyond the second line. The crucial question then was; where would the divisional reserve

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(2) Hamilton to Kitchener 3/6/15, in Ibid.
(3) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.1, p. 350
(4) Ibid., V. 2, p. 46.
(6) 42nd. Division, War Diary 4/6/15, -1/6 Manchester's, W.O. 95/4316.
of 10,000 men be placed? Hunter-Weston did not hesitate. The reserves were sent to the flanks to try to redeem the failures there. The Manchesters finally had to withdraw because of lack of support. Was this another of the "missed opportunities" of Gallipoli? It seems certain that a local success could have been scored, for there were no more continuous trench lines in the vicinity of the Manchesters and the Turks were in considerable disarray. However, even if all the reserves had been used in the centre it is doubtful if they would have been in sufficient numbers to cause more than local retirements. In any case they must soon have met the Turkish reserves (two divisions) which began to appear on the scene at about 4 p.m. on the 4th. In these circumstances a "success" might at the most have pushed the Turks back to Krithia village, but this was hardly a position of great importance. Indeed, even if Achi Baba had been captured (as was shown earlier) this too would not have inconvenienced the Turks to any great extent.

There is also the perennial question to be considered of what would have happened had the allies had another fresh division available. The question is so speculative that to attempt an answer is difficult. All that can be said is that Hamilton, even with an extra division, would not have had a superiority of 2 to 1, and it was always difficult to obtain a decisive result in these circumstances. The fact remains, however, that no one had pressed for an extra division to be present. The reinforcements desired by Churchill after April 25th. were sent and indeed took a leading part in the battle. Hamilton's request of May 17th. was of a long term nature and bore no relation to the June battle. Thus the need for a reserve division in early June was not foreseen by anyone and the fact that

(1) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 46.
(2) 8th. Corps War Diary 4/6/15, W.O. 95/4273.
(3) 42nd. Division, War Diary 4/6/15, W.O. 95/4316. See entries 1/5, 1/6, 1/8 Manchesters
(4) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 53.
it was not present would not seem worthy of further comment.

On the 7th. of June the Dardanelles Committee (the old War Council) met for the first time under the coalition. In addition to Asquith, Kitchener, Balfour, Churchill and Crewe, Lansdowne, Curzon, Bonar Law and Selborne attended. The Government were in receipt of a letter from Hamilton written the previous day stating that he considered the reinforcements originally asked for, two army corps, sufficient to force a decision. It was quickly decided to accede to Hamilton's request. Three divisions of the new armies were to be sent "with a view to an assault in the second week of July", and as one division had already been sent the two army corps were completed.

After this meeting Churchill began to contemplate the use to which the new divisions should be put. He considered that a landing on the Bulair Isthmus would produce the best chance of success. It would cut the Turkish supply lines by land and if submarines could be placed in the Marmora the Turkish Army on Gallipoli would be starved out. A similar idea had also been put forward by Ashmead-Bartlett, a newspaper correspondent recently returned from the Dardanelles. As a result of these submissions Kitchener asked Hamilton if he considered such an operation possible. Hamilton replied that he did not. All the available landing places on the Isthmus were commanded by trenches which it had been proved the guns of the Fleet could not destroy. Furthermore, the navy could not keep three separate forces supplied and there was a great danger from submarines in the exposed anchorages. Even if possible from a naval point of view, Hamilton argued that the force landed would have to be extremely large as it would be open to attack on two fronts. Finally even if Bulair was cut,

(1) Hamilton to Kitchener 6/6/15, Dawnay Papers, Box 17.
(2) Dardanelles Committee Minutes 7/6/15, Cab. 42/3/1.
(5) W.O. to Hamilton 11/6/15, Dawnay Papers, Box 17.
the Turks could be supplied to a certain extent from the Asiatic shore.¹ In fact the only place a landing could be effected safely in the area was the Gulf of Enos but de Robeck had informed Hamilton that such a landing could not be maintained because of lack of small craft.²

Rebuffed on this front, Churchill turned to other alternatives. He told Kitchener that he now assumed that the main push would be made from Anzac and in that case he thought it prudent to have 2 or 3 divisions on hand to throw in if the operation failed to progress.³ Kitchener pointed out that all available transports would be in use until the end of July⁴ but Churchill raised the matter at the Dardanelles Committee the next day and succeeded in getting the Admiralty to investigate the possibility of speeding up the transport arrangements.⁵ In the event a decision was delayed until the Cabinet considered their policy in regard to a new offensive in France in the autumn. It would appear that the Cabinet did not appreciate at this stage the fact that British policy in this area would largely be determined by the French High Command. If the French decided in favour of an offensive it was hardly possible for the British to refuse to take part. Eventually this was realized by the Cabinet and while deprecating a new offensive themselves they authorized Sir John French on July 3rd. to take part even if the opinion of the Cabinet was ignored.⁶ The British then requested a conference with the French at which they hoped that Kitchener would be able to dissuade Joffre from mounting any further offensives before 1916. On July 6th. a private meeting was held between Joffre and Kitchener at Calais and following this the British Government assumed that Kitchener had obtained Joffre's agreement with their policy.⁷ In fact the

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Dardanelles Committee had already decided to send reinforcements to Hamilton

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(1) Hamilton to W.O. 12/6/15, Hamilton Papers, 15/17.
(2) dé Robeck to the Admiralty 12/6/15, Adm. 137/155.
(5) Dardanelles Committee Minutes 17/6/15, Cab. 42/3/4.
(6) Asquith to the King 3/7/15, Cab. 41/36/31.
(7) Dardanelles Committee Minutes 20/8/15, Cab. 42/3/16.
the day before this meeting was held\(^1\) despite the fact that the Cabinet had tacitly acknowledged that they might also be committed to an offensive in France later in the year. However, following the meeting at Calais they confirmed their decision and informed Hamilton on the 7th. that he could expect 5 new divisions for his coming attack.\(^2\) Later, the British Government learned that Joffre was making preparations for a French offensive in Champagne. Joffre, if indeed he had ever succumbed to the British arguments, had changed his mind. The British had little choice but to accept the French decision as indeed the Cabinet had recognized on July 3rd. In line with this policy Kitchener crossed to France and arranged with Joffre to include the B.E.F. in the coming attack. However by this time Hamilton's Suvla offensive had failed and he had requested 90,000 men as replacements and reinforcements. With the commitment to the French there were no surplus divisions that could be sent. Churchill quickly realized this and protested strongly at Kitchener's decision. But Kitchener had merely put into action the policy adopted by the Cabinet on the July 3rd.

During the months of June and July the Fleet confined itself to supporting the Army, despite the efforts of Keyes to have the naval attack reinvestigated.\(^3\) In fact, despite many attempts to improve efficiency, the navy was found to be inadequate for even the former task. The ships found it impossible to locate and silence the Turkish artillery with any consistency at Hellas and Anzac.\(^4\) Nor could the Asiatic batteries, which continually shelled the southern beaches, be eliminated.\(^5\) The aerial spotting force had improved but it was still too small to be of any real value and one ship reported that only on one occasion was an aeroplane

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(1) Dardanelles Committee Minutes 5/7/15, Cab. 42/3/7.
(2) Churchill to Hamilton 7/7/15, C.V.3, p. 1080-1.
(3) Keyes to his wife 13/6/15, Keyes Papers, 2/12.
provided to aid its fire. Furthermore, as time went on, the wear on the ships' guns became more serious. On the Vengeance a 12" gun was discovered to be completely smooth bore and towards the end some guns had a firing pattern of 1,000 yards diameter.  

Was Keyes correct in stating that the Fleet should have renewed the attack on the Narrows? It has sometimes been suggested that June or July was the ideal time for a renewed attack because many of the guns defending the Straits had been removed by the Turks for the use of the Army. Any attempt to establish the state of the Straits defences at a given time is difficult because, although it is true that guns were continually being removed, other batteries were also being installed. Due to the incomplete nature of the records detailed monthly statements of the exact number of the guns is not available. To take an example; in July von Usedom, the German commander of the Straits defences, informed the Kaiser that since the landings in April, 82 guns had been removed for the Army. These are listed on the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>21 cm Howitzer</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>15 cm Field Howitzer</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>15 cm Q.F. Howitzer</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12 cm Q.F. Howitzer</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>12 cm Field Howitzer</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>12 cm MK 24 guns</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.5 cm Q.F. MK 35 guns</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5 cm Q.F. MK 45 guns</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.8 cm Q.F. MK 45 guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.7 cm guns</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7 cm Q.F. guns</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.7 cm Q.F. guns</td>
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A major difficulty in making comparisons is that by far the most complete register of guns in the Straits defences relates to March 1915, when they comprised 32 in the mobile batteries and 87 in the intermediate defences -

(2) "B.H.S." Dardanelles Details, Naval Review, V. 24, 1936, p. 89.
(3) von Usedom to the Kaiser 20/7/15, Cab. 45/215.
a total of 119. At that time some of the smaller calibre guns mentioned by von Usedom as having been removed by July had not yet been installed. However, a rough judgement can still be made. It is clear from the type of gun removed that most, if not all, came from the mobile defences at the entrance of the Straits and from the intermediate defences. Probably 26 of the 82 removed came from the mobile batteries (thus practically dismantling them) and 56 from the intermediate defences. Of this 56, 22 were probably removed from the Peninsula, 15 from the group on the Asiatic side closest to the entrance of the Straits, and 19 from the group around Dardanos fort also on the Asiatic side. Thus probably only 31 guns out of 87 remained in the intermediate defences. However, during the period April-November new guns were continually being installed in other positions. The major group was placed around In Tepe on the Asiatic side for shelling the beaches at Hellas and consisted of at least 24 guns of 10.5 cm and above. Although these guns were not ideally placed in relation to the other defences there is no doubt that they would have proved a serious obstacle to any naval attack and it is hard to see an operation inside the Straits being possible until they were silenced. Despite numerous attempts by the Fleet this feat was never accomplished. A second grouping of guns to a certain extent replaced those removed from the intermediate defences. Two batteries of 21 cm mortars (making three in all) and a 15 cm howitzer were installed on the Asiatic side and a similar group was placed on the European side. At 4 guns per battery this amounted to 21 additional guns. This raised the total of artillery pieces in the intermediate defences to 52. Thus the Fleet would have had 24 new guns and 4 existing ones on the Asiatic side and 52 guns in the intermediate defences.

(1) These are rough estimates only obtained by comparing von Usedom's figures with the list on the Corbett chart. The figures should not be taken as exact.
(2) Mitchell Committee Report, p. 446-7. Note that the figures are for the whole of the occupation period and therefore some of the guns may not have been in position in July.
(3) Ibid.
to face, a total of 80 guns. Admittedly this was a lesser number than the original 119 but it would have still represented a formidable obstacle and the experience of the ships from March to July suggests that they were no more able to silence them at the end of that period that they were at the beginning. Moreover, the minefields remained intact throughout the period although no more additions seem to have been made.\(^1\) The number of searchlights, however, had been increased and this would have made the task of the sweeping force more difficult.\(^2\)

The originator of the August attack at Gallipoli seems to have been Birdwood. On the 13th. of May he informed Hamilton that he was contemplating a sweeping movement around the left flank of Anzac to capture the whole of the Sari Bair Ridge. Once that position was in his hands he suggested that a really large force should be landed under its cover and be pushed across the Peninsula.\(^3\) It was, in fact, the original plan carried out with much larger forces. To capture the ridge Birdwood listed his requirements as an extra division and a brigade.\(^4\) When it became known that 5 more divisions would be available, Hamilton promised three of them to Birdwood keeping the other two as a reserve to reinforce Anzac or, if that attack was successful, to land on the Asiatic coast and advance on Chanak.\(^5\) In reply Birdwood said that he could not employ a third division because of the restricted nature of the Anzac position and he suggested that he be given two divisions and the third be landed at Suvla Bay to occupy the Anafarta Ridge and the valley to the south which he considered essential for supply purposes.\(^6\) Eventually it was decided to land two divisions at Suvla to capture the Anafarta Ridge and to reinforce Anzac with 5 brigades to capture Sari Bair.

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(2) Ibid., p. 446-7.  
(3) Birdwood to Hamilton 13/5/15, W.O. 95/4281.  
(4) Birdwood to Hamilton 16/5/15, in Ibid.  
(5) Hamilton to Kitchener 29/6/15, Hamilton Papers, 15/17.  
The question now arose of who was going to command the new divisions, three of which were to be grouped as an Army Corps. Hamilton suggested Rawlinson or Byng, but there was no chance that such senior commanders would be released from France. Moreover, incredible to relate, Kitchener pointed out that both these commanders were junior to one of the selected divisional commanders, General Mahon. The Corps commander would obviously have to be senior to Mahon and this restricted the choice to Generals Ewart and Stopford. Hamilton chose Stopford on the grounds that Ewart's bulk would make it impossible for him to move along trenches. The other divisional commanders would be Hammersley ("a thoroughly good soldier") and Shaw. Because of the secondary nature of the Dardanelles offensive Hamilton had inferior Generals foist upon him. However he accepted his lot with his usual equanimity, made no protest, and in the weeks ahead even gave the impression that he was quite satisfied with Stopford. He told General Ellison that Stopford was "undoubtedly the best man available who is at the same time senior to Mahon. In fact if only his nerve stands the strain, I could not have a better". Earlier he had written appreciatively to the C.I.G.S. "Thanks so much about Freddy Stopford - I mean giving him a favourable impression of me....I dont like Reid [Stopford's C.O.S.].... But then he is calm and tough, exactly the sub-strata most lacking in Stopford's otherwise complete outfit." After the battle no more remarks of this sort were to be made by Hamilton.

Stopford arrived at Gallipoli in late July and was issued with his orders. He was told that his first objective was the high ground at Lala Baba and the Chocolate and W Hills. When these were captured the main ridge was to be taken by a "coup de main before daylight". A week later

(1) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 74.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Hamilton to Kitchener 16/6/15, Hamilton Papers 15/17.
(4) Kitchener to Hamilton 23/6/15, in Ibid.
(5) Hamilton to Ellison 10/7/15, Ibid. 3/14.
(6) Hamilton to Wolfe-Murray 1/7/15, Ibid. 5/7.
(7) Braithwaite to Stopford 22/7/15, W.O. 158/576.
these orders were revised. Stopford was now told that his first objective was "to secure Suvla Bay as a base for all the forces operating in the northern zone" and if possible to assist the Anzac attack in their attempt on the main ridge. Stopford was quick to agree to this revised plan and he informed Braithwaite "I fear that it is likely that the attainment of the security of Suvla Bay will so absorb the force under my command as to render it improbable that I shall be able to give direct assistance to G.O.C. Anzac."  

Much has been made of this change of plan. It has been said that Stopford became so obsessed with security the bay as a base that he neglected to emphasize to his junior commanders the importance of the ridge. This theory hardly stands up to investigation. It must have been obvious even to Stopford from the lie of the ground that Suvla would not be secure until the dominating ridge had been captured, and he acknowledged this by including a statement to this effect in his orders. He never lost sight of the importance of the ridge (how could he when it overlooked the bay?) and it will be shown that the change in emphasis in Stopford's orders played very little part in the frustration of the plan.

As finally developed, the August plan called for the 11th Division and two brigades of the 10th. to land at Suvla. Birdwood was to be reinforced with the 13th. Division, a brigade of the 10th. and the Indian Brigade. The 53rd. Division would be in reserve and it was originally intended that the 54th. would supply drafts to the other four. The total strength on the Peninsula on the eve of battle was approximately 120,000 men. To oppose this force the Turks had just over 10 divisions on the Peninsula and 6 divisions available for reinforcement from the

(1) Braithwaite to Stopford 29/7/15, W.O. 158/576.
(2) Memorandum by Stopford 31/7/15, in Ibid.
(4) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 138.
(5) Dardanelles Commission, Weekly Troop Strengths, 31/7/15. Cab. 19/31. (The figure does not include the 54th. Division which had not yet arrived at Gallipoli.)
Asiatic coast and the Gulf of Xeros.¹ Thus the opposing numbers were about equal and in the circumstances the chances of an allied victory were slight.

Yet Kitchener had told the Dardanelles Committee on July 24th. that with the new divisions 229,000 men would be concentrated for the battle,² and although Hamilton informed him of the correct position a few days later,³ Kitchener did not disclose the correct figures to his colleagues. Thus when the battle commenced the members of the Dardanelles Committee imagined that the British had a superiority of 2 to 1.

The main attack was launched from Anzac on the night of the 6th. of August. The plan was for two columns of troops to seize the foothills which commanded the routes to the summit of the ridge. Then two more columns would pass through them, the left one splitting in two and making for Hill 971 and Hill Q, the right advancing directly up Rhododendron Ridge to Chunuk Bair.⁴ Sari Bair was meant to be in British hands by dawn.

A diversion at Lone Pine began on the 6th. It was designed to draw Turkish reserves away from the main battle. Unfortunately for Birdwood it also attracted Turkish reserves to the northern theatre and by the time they had arrived it was clear that Lone Pine was not part of the main attack. These reserves were then used against the main advance.

The covering columns succeeded in driving the Turks from the foothills and all their objectives were eventually taken. However, the poor physical state of many of the Anzac veterans and the difficulties of a night march in tortuous and largely unreconnoitred country delayed the capture of the key positions for some two hours.⁶ This meant that the

(1) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, Sketch Map 12 facing p. 161.
(2) Dardanelles Committee Minutes 24/7/15, Cab. 42/3/10.
(3) Hamilton to Kitchener 29/7/15, Dawnay Papers Box 17.
(4) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 185.
assaulting columns began late. More delays were then caused by the lack of space to deploy troops in the assembly areas and one battalion took over an hour to leave its dugouts and form up in marching order.¹ The left column, which had the furthest to go never really had a chance. The 4th. Australian brigade (Monash) leading the left fork of that column soon became lost. At dawn it was nowhere near its objective and although it had suffered few casualties,² the men were exhausted and a rest was ordered. The centre column (Hill Q) lost cohesion and direction in the difficult country. One group diverged to the left and joined up with Monash, another eventually joined the column on Rhododendron Ridge to the right. Only the 6th. Ghurkas took the correct route and at dawn they were only a thousand yards from Hill Q.³

The right column (Chunuk Bair) had made better progress although the greater part of it also lost its way and eventually returned to the start line. However, Brigadier Johnson with a small force pushed to within 55 yards of Chunuk Bair which at this time was undefended. Johnson then paused, according to John North to have breakfast,⁴ according to Aspinall-Oglander to await the advance of the other columns.⁵ Finally, Godley (C in C, A & N.Z. division), ordered an advance. Less than one hundred men of the three hundred who set out even reached the pinnacle beneath the summit.⁶ The first attempt on the ridge had failed. Was this another of the lost opportunities of Gallipoli? It seems unlikely. The fact that the summit of Chunuk Bair was unoccupied during the period of Johnson's pause is hardly relevant. Chunuk Bair was enfiladed from Hill Q on the left and possibly from Battleship Hill on the right. Some of the fire that drove

(1) Dardanelles Commission, Lt-Col. C. Allanson's Evidence 19/1/17, Q11,746, Cab. 19/33.
(2) 4th. Australian Brigade, War Diary, W.O. 95/4353 (150 wounded, 50 killed).
(3) Bean C.E.W., The Story of Anzac V.2, p. 635.
(5) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 105-7.
back Johnson's attack certainly came from Hill Q. Thus Chunuk Bair was untenable unless other sections of the ridge were also taken.

The remainder of the 7th. was spent in resting and reorganizing for a renewed attempt on the 8th. The plan was that columns of reserve troops under General Cox would reinforce Monash on the left and in the centre attempt to take Hill Q. On the right Johnson would again endeavour to take Chunuk Bair.  

On the left no progress was made, the difficult country and the increasing numbers of Turkish reinforcements beating Monash back. In the centre, Cox's column all lost their way and failed to reach Allanson and the Ghurkas still holding out just below the summit of Hill Q. On the right, however, the New Zealanders occupied Chunuk Bair with little loss, the Turkish defenders having drifted away during the night. Throughout the day they managed to beat off a succession of counter-attacks and by evening were still holding out though in much reduced numbers.

During the night of the 8th. another plan was developed. On the left the attempt to take Hill 971 was abandoned. In the centre Cox was to renew his attempt to take Hill Q and on the right more reinforcements under General Baldwin were to support the New Zealanders on Chunuk Bair.

In the event neither Baldwin's nor the majority of Cox's troops had arrived by the time the assault was scheduled to go in. Allanson, then, with his Ghurkas and 2 companies of the 39th. battalion which had reached him on the 8th. (About 350-450 men all told) decided to assault Hill Q alone. The summit was reached without loss. As Allanson recalled, "We dashed down towards Maimos, but had only got about 300 feet down when I saw

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(1) Malthus C., Anzac: A Retrospect, p. 115-7. Bean states that the ground over which the New Zealanders advanced was hidden from Battle-ship Hill. See The Story of Anzac V.2, p. 638.
(2) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 209.
(4) 8th. Infantry Brigade, War Diary 8/8/15, W.O. 95/4302.
(6) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 216.
(7) Dardanelles Commission, Lt.Col. Allanson's Evidence 19/1/17, Q.11,792, Cab. 19/33.
a flash in the bay and suddenly our own Navy put six 12" monitor shells into us."¹ About one-third of Allanson's force was wiped out by the shells and the rest retired to their original positions.² Hill Q was never retaken. This incident has led to some controversy. It has been pointed out that if Allanson was on the rear slopes of Hill Q he could hardly have seen a "flash in the bay" and it has therefore been questioned whether the navy was to blame for the shelling. Furthermore, it has also been noted that naval shells have a very flat trajectory and it has been queried if they could have fallen on the rear slopes of a hill as steep as Hill Q. However the Log of the Bacchante (the ship thought to have been responsible at the time) for the 9th. says, "5.20 opened fire on ridge to S.W. of 305 Hill".³ Now Hill Q is a ridge to the S.W. of 305 Hill and it was at 5.23 that Allanson led his assault.⁴ Also, naval shells, if fired from guns at full elevation, do develop a reasonably steep trajectory and it is possible that a group passed over the ridge and struck Allanson's force. In any case the controversy has little bearing on whether the British could have held the ridge. Allanson's force was too small to face the substantial Turkish counter attacks which must have developed against it and British reinforcements were nowhere in sight. The army was not shelled off the ridge by these few shells for it had never really occupied the ridge in the first place. As Hamilton later said "It is perfectly clear to me that the "Army" did not lose, and could not lose, grip (of Sari Bair) owing to the fact of a few misdirected shells."⁵

On the right, no reinforcements reached the New Zealanders on the 9th. As a result Col. Malone, now in charge of the force holding the summit, withdrew most of his men to a trench on the forward slope, leaving about

(2) Dardanelles Commission, Lt.-Col. Allanson's Evidence 19/1/17, Q11,854, Cab. 19/33.
(3) Bacchante Log 9/8/15, Adm. 53/34649.
100 men to dig in beyond the crest.1 Malone has been much criticized for this action and it has been claimed that had his men been in place on the summit they could have repulsed the Turkish attacks which developed on the 10th. This seems doubtful for Malone had only a few hundred men and the Turkish attacks were made in great strength. In any case Malone had no choice. It will be remembered that the summit of Chunuk Bair was enfiladed by positions to the north,2 and was quite untenable in daylight as long as those positions remained in Turkish hands. Malone chose the only positions possible. Only substantial reinforcements would have saved the British on the 10th. and they were not available.

It has often been said that the August attacks from Anzac almost succeeded and it is true that for short intervals troops did hold two of the key summits of the Sari Bair Range. However, these troops were few in number. Also after the machine guns of the New Zealanders on Chunuk Bair had been knocked out,3 they had nothing more than rifles with which to defend themselves. There was of course no artillery support. In these circumstances it was only a matter of time before these positions were lost to Turkish counter attacks. To hold the positions in strength almost the entire force at Anzac would have been needed on the crest of the range and given the nature of the country this would have taken many more days to organize than Birdwood had at his disposal, for Turkish reinforcements could always reach the high ground faster from their side of the range than could the Anzacs from theirs.

It has also been suggested that even if the entire range from Hill 971 to Battleship Hill had been captured it might have proved impossible to supply such a force across the rugged and twisted ravines. Even the small

(1) Bean C.E.W., Gallipoli Mission, p. 212.
(2) Statement by Maj. Harston of the Wellington Regiment, Malone's adjutant, Cab. 45/234.
(3) "Report of Fighting on Chunuk Bair"..., W.O. 95/4352.
number of men above the Apex on Chunuk Bair received "little food, less water, little ammunition and no bombs".¹

In any case even if the ridge had been captured and it had been found possible to supply the men, that was hardly the end of the battle. Birdwood's original plan only saw this as the first stage. The second stage involved pushing reinforcements across the Peninsula under the cover of the force on Sari Bair. In August no reinforcements were available but it is doubtful if they could have been supplied with water had Hamilton been able to offer Birdwood an extra division.

It has been stated, however, that the capture of the ridge would in itself have been decisive. The argument goes that from this position Turkish communications with the Straits could have been cut by artillery fire.² It has also been said that once the main ridge was reached the ground from there to the Narrows became much easier and it would have been a relatively simple matter for the Army to have progressed across the Peninsula to Maıdos.³ Concerning the feasibility of cutting Turkish communications from Sari Bair, the officer commanding the artillery in the Australian and New Zealand Division has testified that it would have been extremely difficult even to place heavy guns on top of the ridge.⁴ He also stated that from most positions on the ridge the Straits would have been beyond the range of the guns available at Anzac.⁵ A further factor was the limited number of guns in the Anzac area. There were only 18 howitzers and eight 18 pounders⁶ - hardly enough to lay down a devastating barrage. If any further evidence is needed it should be pointed out that the Anzac artillery was limited to 5 shells per day for the howitzers and 10 shells per day for the guns.⁷ Nor is the topographical argument

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¹ Malthus, Anzac, p. 119.
² See the introduction by Sir Ian Hamilton to Pemberton T.J., Gallipoli Today, London, Benn, 1926.
³ Miles, Notes on the Dardanelles Campaign, 1925, p. 137.
⁴ Dardanelles Commission, Brig-Gen. G.N. Johnston's Evidence 2/5/17, Q26,647, Cab. 19/33.
⁵ Ibid., Q26,644 to 26,646.
⁶ Ibid., Q26,658.
⁷ Ibid., Q26,663.
any more convincing. A glance at the map shows that although the ground to the east of the main range is not as difficult as that within the Anzac perimeter, it is still precipitate and hardly ideal for the manoeuvring of troops. Also although the summits of the ranges to the east are generally lower than those of Sari Bair, the Anzacs had shown that it was quite possible to hold positions dominated from above. Viewed in this way the Anzac attack was a lost cause before it began except as a further stage in what must be a long process.

The landing at Suvla Bay took place on the night of August 6th. Three beaches were to be used, B and C outside the bay, and A inside. The plan was that the 11th. division would land and seize the heights of Lala Baba, Hill 10 and Ghazi Baba. At the same time the division would throw out a defensive flank between the salt lake and the beaches at B and C. A force would then circle the salt lake in a clockwise direction and attack the Turkish positions on the W and Chocolate hills which overlooked the landing places. A more direct route between the landing places and these objectives was rejected because it was believed that the hills were heavily defended from the north.¹ The 10th. division was to land later in the morning and advance on the main ridge overlooking the bay.

Although the troops taking part in the assault were new they were hardly fresh. By the time they had reached Suvla Bay they had spent most of the night and the previous afternoon on board the transports in stifling and crowded conditions. Many were suffering from diarrhoea and from the after-effects of cholera injections.² A battalion of the 31st. Brigade (10th. Division) was suffering from ptomaine poisoning.³

There were other problems. Because of the secrecy imposed by G.H.Q. (necessary if the plan was to have any chance) even some of the Brigadiers

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¹ 11th. Division Orders, Cab. 45/227.
² General Hammersley's Report 20/7/16, W.O. 32/5123.
³ 10th. Division, A and Q Branch War Diary 6/8/15, W.O. 95/4294.
were unsure about the exact location of the landing points. The troops had almost no idea of what was expected of them. Furthermore, Mudros harbour could not hold all the shipping required, so the 10th. Division was sent to Mitylene which meant that the General Commanding (Mahon), despite several attempts, never did communicate the orders to the brigade which was to make the division's first landing. Some of the brigades had never practised night marching although this skill was central to the plan.

These were inauspicious signs but it was known that the area was lightly defended and it was hoped that the Turks would be overwhelmed by weight of numbers.

In the event the landings were virtually unopposed and there were no more than 2,000 Turks in the Suvla Bay area. However very little progress was made during the day. The hills overlooking the landing places (Green, Chocolate, W) which were supposed to have been taken by first light, were not assaulted until dusk. What was the cause of these fatal delays?

One reason was that one of the key brigades suffered heavy casualties, especially in officers, when it tried to advance from the beach. In assaultling Lala Baba the leading battalion of the 32nd. Brigade lost 13 officers out of 15 and 250 men. This caused great confusion in the dark and led to some loss of initiative. Although the next objective, Hill 10 could undoubtedly have been taken by the remainder of the Brigade, they settled down north of the Cut to await the landing of the 34th. Brigade at A beach and when that Brigade failed to appear, no attempt was made to capture Hill 10 independently.

(2) Capt. A.E. Bancroft (Signals) to Aspinall-Oglander 9/2/31, Cab. 45/241.
(3) Account of the Suvla Bay Landing in the Miller Papers, PP/MCR/16.
(4) Dardanelles Commission, Statement by General Mahon, Cab. 19/50.
This incident brings us to the next cause of delay, the disruption of the landing of the 34th Brigade. That Brigade was to land inside the bay and assault Hill 10 with the 32nd. However, some of the lighters bringing the troops from the ships grounded on an uncharted reef and six hours were to pass before the final complements of the brigade struggled ashore. Meanwhile units of the Brigade became strung out in the confusion and the dark from A beach to Kiretch Tepe Ridge. Some of these men imagined that they had captured Hill 10 but dawn was to show that they were merely occupying a sand dune on the edge of the salt lake. Eventually the joint attack on Hill 10 scheduled for around midnight took place at 6 p.m.

A further factor was the chaos caused in the landing of the 10th Division. The local naval commander, Admiral Christian, decided that the original landing place at A beach was too dangerous because of the reef. He therefore diverted most of the division to B and C. In the mean time a new landing place inside the bay had been found and the remainder of the division, including its commander, Mahon, landed there and joined elements of the 34th Brigade on Kiretch Tepe Ridge. Instead of being concentrated for an advance the 10th Division was now strung across the whole front.

A fourth factor, by no means unique to Suvla Bay, compounded this already chaotic situation. This was the breakdown in communication between commanders in advanced positions and the higher command. The divisional commander (Hammersley), in trying to make the best use of the units of the 10th Division which had unexpectedly arrived in his area, added the 31st brigade onto the forces on Hill 10 which were preparing to assault the Green, Chocolate and W hills.

(1) 34th. Brigade, War Diary 6/7/15, W.O. 95/4299.
(2) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 244.
(3) "Suvla Bay", Notes by Admiral Christian 7/8/15, Robeck Papers, 4/34.
original force refused to move until the new instructions had been confirmed by Hammersley in writing. Eventually Hammersley was located and this was done but the commander (Sitwell) then refused to move on the grounds that his brigades were scattered and his men exhausted. By this time Hammersley had again changed his plan adding yet more troops to the attack because of the supposed opposition. Finally elements of 5 brigades took part in the attack and the Chocolate and Green hills fell at dusk. The small Turkish garrison however made good their retirement and entrenched on the W hills. As night was then falling operations were suspended until the 8th.

Thus Hamilton's plan had broken down because of the heavy casualties among the leading battalions, the dislocation in the landings of the 34th. Brigade and the 10th. Division, the breakdown in communications between the assault troops and the divisional commander and the reluctance of inexperienced officers to move without detailed instructions. To these factors must be added the inherent defects on the plan. The plan called for two battalions landing at different beaches, without adequate maps, in the dark, to assault a single objective, the topography of which was unknown. Furthermore the long detour around the salt lake was found to be unnecessary. The southern defences of the hills were unmanned and a direct assault from the beaches would have had every chance of success.

On the 7th, as was characteristic on the first day of battles in the First World War, the influence of the high command was negligible. Stopford, off shore in the Jonquil, had as little idea of what was happening on shore as Hunter-Weston had had at Hellas on April 25th. At Imbros, Hamilton received no reports from Stopford throughout the morning. When a message finally arrived around noon it merely stated that the force had

(1) 31st. Brigade War Diary 7/8/15, W.O. 95/4296.
(2) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 257.
been unable to advance beyond the edge of the beach. This was an alarming message and conflicted with other information received by Hamilton that Turkish opposition was weakening. However Hamilton took over 4½ hours to reply to Stopford probably because his attention was focused on the crucial day's fighting at Anzac, and then merely urged him to "take every advantage before you are forestalled". He did not intervene further and events at Suvla were left to take their course.

The 8th. of August has been characterized at the wasted day at Suvla, the day during which men were seen bathing in the bay or lolling around the beaches. Indeed few forward movements were made on the 8th., the only substantial one being by several battalions in the centre to link the troops on Kiretch Tepe Ridge to those on the Chocolate and Green hills. Yet the only substantial group of Turks in the entire area was on the W hills to the right. The Anafarta Ridge was unoccupied and remained unoccupied throughout the day. Why was no progress made? One reason is said to have been the lack of water. The troops that landed on the 6th. and 7th. had only water bottles with them. The main supply was in four lighters which were to arrive early on the 7th. However of the two lighters which entered the bay on the 7th., one hit a reef and was stranded and did not come into operation until late on the 8th. The other came under heavy shrapnel fire and was cut adrift. The third did not arrive until the 9th. and the fourth ran aground leaving Imbros. Furthermore, the mule teams which were to distribute the water were late in disembarking and this made the movement of water in large quantities from the beaches almost impossible. Thus there is little doubt that there was a water shortage on the 8th., although some units apparently received a supply in

(1) G.H.Q. War Diary 7/8/15, W.O. 95/4264.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid.
the early afternoon. Most of the men, however, had used their water allowance by early on the 7th.

A further factor was the poor physical condition of the troops. On the days following the landing the temperature remained in the 90s, the troops were unused to heat, and dysentery had taken its toll. Taken together with the debilitating effect of nervous strain caused by being in action for the first time and lack of sleep, it can be seen that on the 8th, the state of the troops was far from perfect.

These factors were compounded by the reluctance of senior commanders to drive forward men in this condition across difficult scrubby country without adequate artillery support. Hammersley considered the men incapable of further action and thought that an advance might so exhaust them as to render them incapable of resisting an attack. Stopford, under pressure from Hamilton, who had received reports that the Anafarta ridge was still unoccupied, eventually ordered an advance, but made it conditional on no strongly held or entrenched positions being attacked until artillery could be brought up. Under these half hearted instructions only the most tentative forward movements were made. There seems little doubt that more ruthless commanders could have driven the troops forward to some extent. However, it would have been a formidable undertaking to organize an uphill advance on a five mile front over difficult country for a distance of 1½ miles. Such a feat was never managed at Hellas even by Hunter-Weston who was hardly backward in ordering attacks. Furthermore, who is to say that Hammersley would not have been proved correct? Even if sections of the heights had been taken, exhausted troops may have proved incapable of holding them. Another factor that is often overlooked is the

(1) "The 32nd. Infantry Brigade at Suvla Bay, Hamilton Papers, 6/6.
(3) G.H.Q. War Diary 8/8/15, W.O. 95/4264.
difficulty of supplying a large force on the heights. In the absence of pack transport on the 8th., could ammunition, food and water have been manhandled the three or four miles to the Anafarta Ridge? It should be remembered that at Hellas a dangerous situation would have developed in this regard if the advance inland had been rapid. Finally the disorganized state of the troops on the Sulva plain should not be forgotten. The 10th. Division was still split into two unequal parts, with its commander removed from the main area of action. The 11th. Division was scattered all over the central plain, into at least four major groups.  

G.H.Q., who intervened more actively on this day, remained convinced that "golden opportunities" were thrown away on the 8th. However, Aspinall, who visited Suvla, only saw the men resting in reserve and although he visited Hammersley, made no extensive tour of troops in the forward areas. Much has been made of Hamilton's intervention late on the 8th. After visiting Stopford, Hamilton ordered Hammersley to place at least one battalion on the high ground immediately. But, the troops were so scattered, and their commanding officer so unfamiliar with their disposition, that it took some hours to concentrate the men in fighting order. Some patrols were even withdrawn from the heights themselves in order to fulfill the order. This is an indication of how difficult it would have been to organize two divisions for an overall advance. In the event the British were forestalled by elements of the Turkish 12th. Division which had arrived on the ridge some minutes before. Nevertheless, it is hardly accurate to say that the British lost the battle by these few minutes. The British formations were weak and could have only occupied a small section of the ridge. They would soon have been opposed by the

(1) See the map facing p. 281 in Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2.
(2) Aspinall to Hamilton 8/8/15, G.H.Q. War Diary, W.O. 95/4264.
(3) 32nd. Brigade War Diary 8/8/15, W.O. 95/4299.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Mitchell Committee Report, Map 35.
entire Turkish 12th. Division and their fate could not have been long delayed.

Thus the Suvla plan failed. Great emphasis in accounts of the battle has been laid on the ineptitude of Stopford and Hammersley, who were both eventually relieved of their commands. The real reason for the failure was that the plan was too ambitious. To succeed, the troops had to overcome a night landing in unknown country, advance across a difficult plain in extreme heat and occupy a ridge five miles long capturing intermediate positions along the way, all in forty eight hours. For troops green from England and in poor physical shape such a task was impossible. Furthermore, it is difficult to see how the operation could have affected the main issue at Anzac even if it had been successful. The axes of advance of the two forces were at an angle and the further the Suvla force pushed on the further it got from Birdwood’s troops. Moreover, the Anafarta Ridge, at its highest point, was over four miles from Sari Bair and dominated by it. Therefore in no sense was it a commanding position. Birdwood’s contention that the Sari Bair position could not have been held without a success at Suvla hardly applies because the guns that he stated could shell the main ridge were dummies and in any case the position was too far distant for artillery, especially in the small numbers available to the Turks, to be a factor. A further advance from the Anafarta Ridge would also have proved futile for it would have taken the troops away from the main objective, the Narrows forts, and towards the widest part of the Peninsula, where there were many more Anafartas to capture. In short a victory at Suvla would only have been useful if the attack from Anzac had succeeded for in that case it would have provided

(1) This was the conclusion of a War Office Committee set up to examine the reasons for the Suvla failure. See the report of the committee, W.O. 32/5119.
(2) Miles, Notes on the Dardanelles Campaign, 1925, p. 143.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Dardanelles Commission, Birdwood’s Evidence 6/3/17, Q21,308, Cab. 19/33.
a well situated base for the northern force.

Three chapters of The World Crisis are devoted to the June to August phase of the Dardanelles Campaign. Of course from June, Churchill, although a member of the Dardanelles Committee, did not hold high executive office. He is therefore a more peripheral figure to the central direction of the war and this is reflected in his narrative. As First Lord, his own minutes and letters and the Admiralty documents which he had at his disposal formed an important component of his account. It was seen that at times they formed up to 40% of some sections of the book. During this period however, the documentation falls off both in quantity and in quality. The chapters become shorter as Churchill's sources become thinner and those documents which are reproduced become less central to the main issues and are often merely surveys of the situation which seem to have had very little impact on policy formation. This is a trend which will continue throughout the remainder of The World Crisis. Churchill's account at this point also becomes more disjointed. He tends to concentrate on topics in which he is interested instead of attempting a general survey. Thus we are informed at great length about Churchill's Bulair project and the endeavours of Keyes to resurrect the naval attack but there is comparatively little on the military situation. For the purposes of this discussion Churchill's narrative can be divided into four sections, the questions of reinforcements for Hamilton, June and July at Hellas, naval activity and options during the period and the August attack from Anzac and Suvla Bay.

The first major issue to be discussed by Churchill is the question of reinforcements for Hamilton. Churchill was of course strongly in favour of sending the two divisions and quotes his paper of June 1st: in which he suggested that they should be sent as soon as possible. 1 He then describes the Dardanelles Committee meeting of June 7th. and the Cabinet of June 9th. at which it was decided to send these troops and concludes

(1) The World Crisis, p. 791.
"We had now at length got on June 9 the kind of decisions which were necessary to carry the enterprise through to success. There was no military reason of any kind why the decisions which were reached on June 7 and June 9 should not have been taken within 48 hours of Sir Ian Hamilton's telegram of May 17. All the facts necessary to the decision were equally available on that date; all the troops were equally available; all the arguments were equally clamant. But from causes in which the enemy had no part, which arose solely from the confusion into which the governing instrument in this country had been thrown, from a fortnight to three weeks were lost for ever."1

Churchill concludes from this argument that the new divisions could have arrived at Gallipoli in time for an attack in the second week of July. In fact they did not arrive until August, by which time the Turks had been greatly reinforced and, Churchill states, the opportunity lost.2

This analysis ignores several important points, one of which was the way Hamilton framed his request for reinforcements. It was noticed earlier that Hamilton had laid great stress on the fact that the restricted nature of the positions held made it difficult to employ more troops until further advances had been made and that this removed some of the urgency from the matter. Furthermore Kitchener's letter to Hamilton on May 18th. clearly shows that it was Kitchener's scepticism of the likelihood of an early victory that prevented him from replying more positively, not the fact that a coalition government was in the process of formation. Churchill has equated the fact that the government's decision-making was impaired with Kitchener's negative response. But, the process of coalition making hardly affected Kitchener. On Churchill's own evidence he weathered this period with little effort and was not even aware that his own position was under consideration.3 His power to make decisions was, therefore, unaffected and it should be noticed that the crisis did not prevent him from despatching the 52nd. Division to Hamilton. What prevented him from going further was Hamilton's equivocal letter of May 17th. and his own doubts

(1) The World Crisis, p. 795.
(2) Ibid., p. 795-6.
(3) Ibid., p. 777.
concerning the ability of Hamilton to get through with any number of reinforcements. No doubt the political crisis played a part in Kitchener's indecision but it is too simplistic to argue, as Churchill does, that it was the only relevant factor.

Churchill's further point that had the troops arrived in July a victory would have been assured now needs to be considered. His argument assumes that the Turks would not have had the troops available in July that they had in August to stop the Allied advance. However, the reinforcements sent to Gallipoli in that month by the Turks came largely in response to the obvious British preparations for a new offensive. There is no reason to believe that Hamilton's preparations in June would have been any less conspicuous. What was to prevent the Turks matching the British and sending their reinforcements two or three weeks earlier? In any case, unlike the British, the Turks always had a large number of divisions near at hand with which they could have reinforced the peninsula provided they could delay the attackers until the new divisions arrived. The experience of this campaign showed that they were always apt to do this and in these circumstances Churchill's "lost opportunities" are largely theoretical.

Eventually, of course, two more divisions were sent to Hamilton and Churchill next examines the steps taken by the War Council to send these additional reinforcements. His account of his own role in adding the two divisions (53rd. and 54th.) to the original force is given and agrees with the conclusion reached earlier, that it was largely due to Churchill's influence that the divisions were sent.1 He also states that there was no reason why these troops could not have been sent earlier2 and it is certainly strange that Kitchener did not initially think to provide reinforcements in the event of the battle failing to progress. However,

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(1) The World Crisis, p. 799-801.
(2) Ibid., p. 796.
Churchill has either forgotten, or decided not to include, the fact that a decision on the two divisions was postponed until the Cabinet considered their policy for 1915 on the Western Front. Moreover, it is hard to see that the late arrival of these divisions decisively affected the August battle at Gallipoli. Churchill states that they had to be thrown into battle direct from their voyage, implying that if they had arrived earlier their effect would have been greater. But is it the case that an extra two or three weeks in the east would have greatly benefitted these formations? In fact, the 10th. and 11th. Divisions were probably weakened by their early arrival because of their exposure to dysentry. In addition the 53rd. and 54th. Divisions were little more than half strength, a fact not mentioned by Churchill, and because of this would never have been used by Hamilton as more than a reserve. Thus they were fated to play a minor role in the battles and Churchill places far too much significance on their late despatch from England.

It was noted above that Churchill makes no mention of the Cabinet decision to renew their "Western" policy before deciding to send further reinforcements to Hamilton. This omission seriously affects his later discussion of the disputes with Kitchener at the Dardanelles Committee when Kitchener announced that contrary to the policy decided at Calais in July, the French were going ahead with their autumn offensive and the British would have to comply. Churchill argues that this was a "departure from the decisions of the Cabinet maturely made and endorsed by the Calais Conference", and he later says that "it was on this basis [no offensive in France] that we had looked forward and prepared for the new battle on the Gallipoli Peninsula". Clearly Churchill has not recalled accurately the actual decision made by the Cabinet for it was noticed

(1) The World Crisis, p. 826.
(2) Ibid., p. 855.
(3) Ibid., p. 854.
earlier that French had been authorized to participate in the offensive even if British advice that it should not take place was ignored. Thus the new offensive at Gallipoli was prepared on the basis that there might not be an autumn attack in France but that the final decision was Joffre's. It is hardly reasonable then for Churchill to blame Kitchener for acquiescing in the French decision, for the War Minister was only carrying out a decision made by the Cabinet, a body of which, it must not be forgotten, Churchill was a member.

In this chapter of The World Crisis now under consideration the Churchill papers contain an interesting example of the constraints under which historians operate when they are also intimately acquainted with the principal participants in the events described. In his section on the "very hot" discussion of the Dardanelles operation by the Cabinet on June 9th., Churchill originally included this paragraph.

"Colonel Hankey had not been present at the Committee meeting, [Dardanelles Committee of June 7] but had received from the Prime Minister the record of the conclusions, and he also - I presume under the direction of Mr. Asquith - prepared a brief reasoned statement for the Cabinet of the reasons leading up to these decisions. In this memorandum the phrase was used that we should 'prosecute the operations at the Dardanelles with the utmost vigour'. When Colonel Hankey's note was read out at the beginning of the Cabinet by the Prime Minister these words gave the greatest offence to several important Ministers not members of the War Council."2

Hankey, who was shown most of the chapters of The World Crisis in proof, was alarmed at this section. He told Churchill he would prefer all mention of his name deleted because of his position as a public servant. Nor did he want it mentioned that he had prepared an appreciation on the Dardanelles.3 No doubt the news that he had antagonised a section of the Cabinet would also have harmed Hankey's position. There was also the question of his having advocated "vigorously" an operation that had later

(1) The World Crisis, p. 855-6.
(2) Churchill Papers 8/151. The section was included after the sentence ending "before the Cabinet on the 9th." on p. 794.
failed. In any event it was a request that Churchill could hardly refuse.
The section on Hankey was removed from The World Crisis and Hankey's
role in the events described went unrecorded.

From considerations of high policy Churchill turns to a consideration
of the battles at Hellas during June and July. Typical of his treatment
of these episodes are his comments on the June 4th. action.

"As in all the battles on the Peninsula, the issue hung in a
trembling balance. The Turks were thrown into such confusion
that on only two kilometres of their front no less than twenty-
five battalions (or parts of battalions) were mingled in the
line without any higher organization. In these straits the
Turkish Divisional Commander reported that no further British
attack could be resisted."¹

The obvious implication is that had reinforcements been available the
British could have broken through. It was suggested earlier that a local
success might have been possible had the Corps Commander (Hunter-Weston)
handled the reserves in a more imaginative way. However, for reasons
that are not obvious Churchill continues the line already adopted in The
World Crisis and no word of criticism of this commander appears in the
narrative. Perhaps Churchill had obtained his opinion of Hunter-Weston
from Hamilton, who always seemed to regard him as a perfectly competent,
thought somewhat brutal, commander. It was also suggested earlier that
even a fresh division may not have led to anything more than a slight forward
move. Churchill implies however that much larger results could have been
expected. During this period he very rarely states what he expected
a British victory would mean. Generally he seems to equate
victory with the capture of Achi Baba. Certainly in his paper of June 1st.,
which is included in The World Crisis he stated that "As soon as our
troops can obtain positions from which the Kilid Bahr plateau can be
rendered untenable [i.e. Achi Baba] the whole Turkish army concentrated
there is lost".² But the comment has been made on several occasions that

¹ The World Crisis, p. 811.
² Ibid., p. 792.
the capture of the Achi Baba would not have made the Kibid Bahr plateau untenable or increased the vulnerability of the narrows forts in any way. So due caution must be exercised when we read in The World Crisis that these battles could have brought victory. A final point that has to be made about this battle is that if the action failed through the lack of one division, then Churchill must share the responsibility, for at the end of April, when the division should have been despatched, he was silent on the need for extra troops. This point is not mentioned in connection with the June 4th. battle in The World Crisis.

It has not been thought worthwhile to describe in detail in the first half of this chapter the other actions (June 28th. and July 12-13th.) covered by Churchill. In essence the issues were the same as those on June 4th. and are treated in the same way in The World Crisis. Churchill never questions the necessity to fight these actions, although they were in fact the eastern equivalent of such battles as Aubers Ridge and Festubert, against which he has many harsh things to say. Thus, although he laments the fact that Hamilton's divisions were continually dwindling and that their "deficiencies were never overtaken by the drafts supplied by the War Office", he never draws the conclusion that part of their deficiency was caused by these futile and bloody encounters, which were planned and sanctioned by Hunter-Weston and Hamilton, the commanders he apparently held in such high regard.

Churchill next discusses the role of the Fleet during June and July at Gallipoli. Generally, Churchill is highly critical of the naval inactivity which he says characterized the period. He states that "The fact that during all this period the British Fleet neither attacked nor threatened the forts at the Narrows nor attempted to sweep the minefields enabled the German and Turkish Commanders to draw upon the medium and

(1) The World Crisis, p. 812.
(2) Ibid.
mobile artillery which defended the Straits for the purpose of succouring the Fifth Turkish Army in its desperate struggle.1 He publishes some of the correspondence between the German Commander of the Straits defences, von Usedom and the Kaiser2 and includes the list of guns removed as at 20/7/15 which was set out in a table in the first half of this chapter and claims that the guns removed "were a vital factor in the defences of the Narrows".3 The implication of all this is that this period provided an opportunity for the fleet to make another attack on the Narrows. However, Churchill's account ignores two facts. The first is that von Usedom was probably exaggerating the plight of the defence in order to obtain as much help as possible from Germany. His estimates of the ammunition supply of the Turkish army for example,4 were proved by events to be most inaccurate and it is possible that his remarks on the ammunition available to the forts was just as wide of the mark. The second factor is that von Usedom apparently did not inform the Kaiser that while guns were being taken away from the Straits defences, others were being installed, often in different positions. Unlike the Kaiser, however, Churchill must have been aware of this fact because he had seen the report of the Mitchell Committee, the source from which the information on guns installed, used earlier in this chapter, was obtained. It was shown that by comparing the two lists of figures a reasonably accurate position of the Straits defences at the end of July could be obtained. The conclusion reached was that, although on balance the defence had lost guns, it still constituted a formidable obstacle and it is doubtful if the fleet had any better chance of success during this period than it had in March. Furthermore, the fleet, from mid-July, was fully occupied in preparing for the new landings and Churchill could hardly expect de Robeck to authorize an attack on the Narrows just before operations which were 

(1) The World Crisis, p. 813-4.
(2) Ibid., p. 814-5.
(3) Ibid., p. 814 N.
(4) See the letter quoted by Churchill on p. 815.
designed to settle the whole campaign were launched. Nor did the fleet have sufficient ammunition to support an offensive by the military and attack the Narrows. These aspects of the problem are not discussed by Churchill.

Churchill also blames de Robeck for the failure to take up the "option" of landing at Bulair. He states definitely that the "plan fell through largely because of naval difficulties". It is true that de Robeck had severe reservations about the operation. These included the inability of the navy to supply three separate landings, lack of small craft, and the danger from submarines, all of which were important factors in the abandonment of the plan. But, as has been shown, de Robeck's objections were not ill-considered. The difficulties detailed by him were real enough and Churchill makes no attempt to refute them. Furthermore, naval objections were not the only reasons for avoiding Bulair. The strongly defended landing places, the fact that any force landed there would be open to attack from both sides and the great distance from the narrows were military considerations which weighed heavily with Hamilton, as was shown by his correspondence with Kitchener. In fact Churchill had access to this correspondence but it is noticeable that Hamilton is not criticized in The World Crisis for the fact that the plan was abandoned.1

1 The World Crisis, p. 799.

Churchill omitted a paragraph from this section of The World Crisis which claimed that had de Robeck known of the "beetle" landing craft or had the Admiralty offered them to the Admiral (he states that the new administration was "not fully acquainted with their use & value") the Bulair plan might have gone ahead. What is implied in this paragraph is that de Robeck's objections to Bulair could have been overcome by the provision of these craft, which had Churchill remained at the Admiralty would have been offered to him. The lack of small craft was certainly a difficulty but as has been shown was only one of a number of objections to the plan. Thus it is unlikely that the knowledge of the existence of the "beetles" would have affected de Robeck's decision. See Churchill Papers 8/151. The paragraph was to have been included after "from Sir Ian Hamilton" on p. 799.
After harshly criticizing the high command of the Fleet Churchill proceeds to bestow praise on one facet of the work of the Fleet where it was hardly due. In discussing the use of ships' guns by the military as a substitute for heavy mobile artillery he claims that "The observation and direction of the ships' fire attained every week a higher efficiency. This process continued steadily until naval co-operation in land fighting on Gallipoli had become a factor of the utmost value". It is certainly true that the fire of the fleet deterred the Turks to a certain extent from attacking in the open and was also a factor in maintaining the morale of the allied troops. However, it was suggested earlier that the ship guns were not as efficient as Churchill implies. No doubt co-operation between the Navy and the Army on shore improved as the months went by as Churchill states, but he ignores the fact that this would be offset to a certain extent by the inaccuracies caused by the wear to the ships' guns. Furthermore, it was shown that the ships were never able to obtain the pinpoint accuracy necessary to destroy the Turkish artillery and, although Churchill claims that observation of the ships' fire had improved, he neglects to mention that the aerial spotting force was never large enough to ensure continual good observation for the ships.

As in Churchill's account of the April 25th landings, there is no discussion in The World Crisis of the planning of the August offensive. He does state that Kitchener misled the Dardanelles Committee on the strength of the British forces available for the attack and it will be remembered that this indeed was the case. On the preparations at Gallipoli, however, The World Crisis is silent. The explanation for this would seem to be that by avoiding a discussion of the merits and feasibility of the plan Churchill can focus attention away from the planners and on to the commanders who were to put the plan into operation. This, as will be

(1) The World Crisis, p. 816.
(2) Ibid., p. 830.
shown, serves a very useful purpose for Churchill.

For clarity, Churchill's accounts of the Anzac and Suvla offensives will be considered separately, beginning with Anzac.

Churchill's narrative of the Anzac battle opens with brief summaries of the diversions as Hellas and at Lone Pine.¹ He states that the Hellas action was a success and that the Turks were able to withdraw only 1 division from that sector to reinforce Anzac.² This is possibly true but Churchill does not draw the attention of the reader to the fact that these men played a crucial part in thwarting the northern advances. Nor does Churchill make clear that the diversions at Hellas soon developed into full scale battles in which the Commander (de Lisle) seemed to ignore the original objective, and attempt to secure a major victory, the only result being heavy casualties.

The description of the opening plan of the battle at Anzac in The World Crisis is brief and generally accurate. There are, however, two errors of fact. Churchill states that the covering forces on the night of the 6th. gained their objectives "punctually and successfully".³ In fact, as has been shown, both the left and right covering columns were several hours late in achieving their objectives and this affected crucially the chances of the assaulting columns to reach the main ridge by daylight. Churchill also implies that after the failure of the columns to progress, the remainder of the day was spent in resting and re-organizing the troops.⁴ This was certainly the case on most of the front. However, it should be remembered that all through the 7th. the New Zealanders continued to fight their way towards Chunuk Bair.

More important than these minor errors are the conclusions drawn by Churchill from the day's fighting. "Had it been possible to have leap-frogged the exhausted troops by a wave of fresh reinforcements, the whole

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(1) The World Crisis, p. 830.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid., p. 832.
(4) Ibid., p. 836.
crest of Sari Bair might well have fallen before noon into our possession.¹ This he calls the "cardinal fatality".² This process would have been much more difficult than is implied by this passage. On the left, the problem on the 7th. was hardly one of leapfrogging fresh troops through Monash's exhausted column for that formation was hopelessly lost and well away from the main route to the summit. The problem facing a new formation would have been to actually find the correct route to 971 and the experience of the columns from the 13th. Division on the 8th. (they all lost their way) gives no great cause for optimism. The same factors faced an attempt to relieve the troops in the centre and on the right but to a lesser extent in that the distances were shorter. Another difficulty in using reinforcements on the 7th. was the problem of fitting more men into the Anzac perimeter and of supplying them once they were there. In fact Churchill admits these difficulties³ but gives the impression that they could have been overcome. He does not, however, put forward any explanation as to how these problems might have been solved.

Churchill's description of events on the 8th. is barely adequate.⁴ He makes no mention of the columns of reserves which did attempt to "leap-frog" through the exhausted men near the summits. The performance of these columns certainly throws grave doubts on Churchill's proposed solution for resuming the attack on the 7th. He also states that the original front of attack was restricted on the day to Chunuk Bair and Hill Q.⁵ In fact, a decision to this effect was not made until the 9th. On the 8th. Monash made a further attempt to advance up Hill 971 though with no result. Furthermore, Churchill adds that Monash and the centre column failed to advance partly because they were "unsupported by any

¹ The World Crisis, p. 832.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid., p. 836.
⁵ Ibid.
help from Suvla Bay". 1 This is a grossly misleading statement. Even if the Suvla landing had proceeded as scheduled, there is no possible way that Stopford's men could have assisted this column on Hill Q which was many miles from the landing points and at an angle of 90 degrees to the main line of advance. On the left the Suvla force could only have affected the issue if their advance had either outflanked the entire Anzac position causing a general Turkish withdrawal all along the line or if they could have provided more direct assistance to Monash by advancing from Buyuk Anarfarta along the main ridge to 971. In fact, the seizure of the Tekke Tepe ridge would not have outflanked the Turks at Anzac though continued further advances might have. Whether these advances would have been possible will be discussed later. It suffices to say here that they could not have been made by the 8th., the period in which Churchill apparently expected their influence to become important. It is also hard to see how an advance along the main ridge would have been possible by the 8th., for this would have involved increasing the almost impossible objectives given to the Anzac force still further. Moreover the country between Buyuk Anarfarta and 971 is some of the most difficult and tangled on the peninsula, a continuation in fact of the series of ridges and ravines which prevented Monash's seasoned troops from discovering the correct route to the summit of the ridge. In these circumstances the task set the inexperienced Suvla divisions by Churchill is clearly impossible.

In describing the battles of the 9th., Churchill concentrates on the dramatic events concerning the Ghurka attack on Hill Q. In fact almost his entire account consists of an extract from the diary of Col. Allanson who led the assault. 2 This extract has since been published many times and in slightly different versions and in some ways it seems a very unreliable document. James has pointed out that in the description of the

(1) The World Crisis, p. 836.
(2) Ibid., p. 837-8.
shells incident the words "I saw a flash in the bay" were not included in The World Crisis. 1 Certainly Allanson's account is more credible without the phrase for it was pointed out earlier that the bay "could not be seen from the reverse slopes". It is not certain if this passage was removed by Allanson or Churchill. There are other curious statements in the extract in The World Crisis. Allanson claims he saw "motors and wheeled transport, on the roads leading to Achi Baba." 2 The Turks however had no motor transport. Also he says "I saw the advance at Suvla Bay had failed, though I could not detect more than one or two thousand against them". 3 Yet it was almost impossible for Allanson to have identified the numbers of Turks at Suvla at that distance, many of whom would have been concealed by the scrub. Those opposing Mahon at Kiretch Tepe Ridge would certainly have been out of sight. Moreover, Allanson has seen too much. He has just taken part in a ferocious assault, seen his friends killed at his side, suffered the trauma of having 150 men of his brigade wiped out by shells and been wounded in the leg. Yet he claims he was able to witness the scene at the Straits, at Kilid Bahr and at Suvla and recall it in some detail. Finally, in Churchill's account Allanson says his men had got 100 feet down the slope when they were hit and in James' account 300 ft. 4 Though Churchill no doubt included Allanson's account for its vivid and compelling prose these very qualities suggest that it does not entirely ring true. Thus although the actual assault on the ridge no doubt took place much as Allanson described it, his account of what he witnessed from the ridge must be treated with more caution than Churchill does in The World Crisis.

Allanson's account serves another purpose for Churchill. Phrases such as "the key of the whole Peninsula was ours", "we commanded Kilid Bahr, and the rear of Achi Baba and the communications to all their army there" and "Below I saw the Straits" 5 which occur throughout Allanson's account are

(1) James, Gallipoli, P.290N. He also says they are not included in the version published with Official History. In fact the Official History does not contain extracts from Allanson's Diary.

(2) The World Crisis, p. 837.

(3) Ibid., p. 837-8.

(4) Ibid., p. 837; James Gallipoli, p. 290.
all designed to impress on the mind of the reader the commanding position which had been reached by Allanson and how near the Anzac attack had been to final victory. However, these sections of Allanson's, and therefore Churchill's, account are no more reliable than those already discussed. It was shown earlier that the British never really commanded Sari Bair in sufficient numbers or over a substantial enough front to claim that the ridge was theirs. Even if Allanson had not been shelled off this ridge the fate of the larger force of New Zealanders on Chunuk Bair is an indication that, unless reinforced in considerable strength, their positions were always vulnerable to counter-attack, especially as the defenders had no heavy or automatic weapons available. Furthermore, there are grounds for thinking that the entire ridge had to be captured before any position on it was secure, for areas like Hill Q and Chunuk Bair could always be enfiladed from sections of the ridge to the north. The difficulty of supplying a large force on the ridge, as with most logistical problems, is not discussed in *The World Crisis*.

It is even doubtful if the ridge was the "key to the whole Peninsula" as claimed by Allanson and Churchill. Certainly, if the testimony of General Johnston is accurate, large reinforcements of long range artillery would have been needed before the Straits could be dominated, providing of course it proved possible to manoeuvre the guns on to the ridge. Also, Allanson's proposition is based on the fact that, although the Anzacs were able to maintain their positions when the Turks held the heights, with the Anzacs in the dominant position the Turks would have been forced back. Here is a further example of that under-estimation of the fighting quality of the Turks which on many other occasions proved to be disastrously wrong. The final claim that the ridge "commanded Kilid Bahr and the rear of Achi Baba", as a glance at a map will show, is so preposterous that it does not require further comment.

We must now turn to Churchill's description of the Suvla Bay landing.
He states that the Suvla plans involved securing "Suvla Bay as a winter base for Anzac and all the troops operating in that neighbourhood." This it will be remembered was the second version of the plan as modified by Stopford and, although it was suggested earlier that too much has been made by historians of this modification, Churchill seems unaware of the fact that it had even taken place.

The World Crisis then moves on to discuss the events of the 6/7th. August. It is noticeable that Churchill's account makes no mention of the fact that the troops were in a poor physical state before the landing, although it was shown earlier that this was a major factor in the lack of progress made on the 7th. and 8th. His narrative of the battle instead begins with the landing of the 32nd, 33rd, and 34th. Brigades which he says disembarked "without much loss in two or three hours." It is true that none of the Brigades suffered many casualties and that the 32nd. and 33rd. Brigades were disembarked in the time mentioned. However, the grounding of the landing craft of the 34th. Brigade was a more important factor than Churchill states and it delayed the landing for a further three hours, making the disembarkation time 6 hours, not the two or three mentioned in The World Crisis. This is an important error, for as a consequence Churchill's account makes no mention of the fact that it was this delay which was largely responsible for the inaction of the 32nd. Brigade after their capture of Lala Baba and the subsequent delay in the joint attack on Hill 10. Nor does he mention that the 32nd. Brigade suffered heavy casualties especially in officers, in assaulting Lala Baba, though this is an important factor in the relatively poor showing made by this formation over the next two days.

For the proceedings of the 7th. of August at Suvla Bay Churchill's account is completely inadequate. His description of the landing of the 10th. Division gives the impression that the event proceeded

(1) The World Crisis, p. 828.
(2) Ibid., p. 833.
(3) Ibid., p. 833-4.
in an orderly manner. He is apparently unaware of the fact that the landing was disrupted by the decision to land the greater part of it on the right flank and the subsequent decision to land the remainder (with the commander) on the left. This movement in fact disrupted the whole plan, caused great delays and is essential for an understanding of why so little progress was made on the 7th. Indeed it was shown earlier that it was the fact that units of the 10th. Division were added to the force that was to attack Chocolate Hill that caused such confusion between the brigades involved and the divisional commander and that most of the day was spent in sorting out the various misunderstandings which occurred. Churchill does not mention any of these facts and offers no explanation at all for the failure to advance more on this day. Furthermore he states that instead of advancing directly inland from the beaches, the troops "walked" along the sandy shore around the Salt Lake, a march of five miles in the heat of the day, before attacking Chocolate Hill.\(^1\) Again no explanation is given for this event. The impression given, however, is that it was the result of the incompetence of the commanders on the spot. This is incorrect. It was shown earlier that the route for this attack was chosen by Hamilton's staff on the grounds that the direct approaches to the hill were heavily defended. This was found later not to be the case but the error is easily understandable because no detailed reconnaissance of the ground could be made before the battle without disclosing the plan to the Turks. Nevertheless, if the blame for this error lies anywhere, it lies with the staff and not with the local commanders as is implied by \textit{The World Crisis}.

Churchill begins his description of events on the 8th. with a portrait of the commander of the 9th. Corps, General Stopford. Churchill describes Stopford as "an agreeable and cultivated gentleman who fifteen years before\(^1\) \textit{The World Crisis}, p. 834.
had served in the South African War as Military Secretary to Sir Redvers Buller. After commanding the London District, he had left the Army in 1909, and had lived until the outbreak of the great struggle in a retirement unhappily marked by much ill health.\(^1\) It is not difficult to detect from this passage that Churchill had no great opinion of Stopford. In an earlier draft of *The World Crisis* he made this even clearer by saying "not being selected for high employment he [Stopford] had retired from the army.\(^2\) Later this was deleted and replaced by the last sentence in the passage quoted above, which was at least slightly more considerate to Stopford's reputation. No attempt is made in *The World Crisis* to explain how such an apparent nonentity came to be chosen as the Corps Commander for an important battle. Churchill merely states that Stopford "found himself for the first time in his life in a position of high and direct responsibility.\(^3\) As was shown earlier, it was the ludicrous regard for the system of seniority on the part of Kitchener and the War Office that gave Stopford his command. It was also shown that, although Hamilton had initially asked for more appropriate commanders, he had acquiesced in Kitchener's decision and even given the impression that he was reasonably satisfied with Stopford. None of this information appears in *The World Crisis*. Therefore, although Churchill is quite prepared to place most of the blame on Stopford for the failure of the campaign, he is apparently not prepared to extend his criticism to those who either appointed him or acquiesced in his appointment.

Churchill places the entire blame for the failure to advance on the 8th. on Stopford who, he says, was concerned that the enemy might be more numerous than the intelligence reports stated and that there might be more in the area than was revealed by aeroplane reconnaissance.\(^4\) He then gives an

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(1) *The World Crisis*, p. 838.
(2) *Churchill Papers* 8/91.
(3) *The World Crisis*, p. 839.
(4) Ibid.
impression of the scene at Suvla on the 8th, a

"placid, prudent, elderly English gentleman [Stopford] with his 20,000 men spread around the beaches, the front lines sitting on the tops of shallow trenches, smoking and cooking, with here and there an occasional rifle shot, others bathing by hundreds in the bright blue bay where, disturbed hardly by a single shell, floated the great ships of war." ¹

For good measure he then gives Aspinall's impression of the scene, which was couched in similar terms.²

It was suggested earlier that these impressions were hardly representative of the true state of affairs at Suvla. Churchill's and Aspinall's account ignore the fact that, in temperatures to which they were hardly accustomed, most of the men had been 48 hours without adequate supplies of water and proper food; that their physical condition before this ordeal had been poor; that the strain of being in action for the first time had exercised its debilitating effects and that many of their leaders, the junior officers, were dead or wounded and that most of the units of the 10th. and 11th. Divisions were hopelessly intermixed. The World Crisis is more accurate in its description of the supine behaviour of Stopford, and Churchill is correct in stating that there were no continuous trench lines and only a few thousand Turks in front of the 9th. Corps. What he does not explain is how men in the condition described above and scattered all over the Suvla plain (the fact that the 10th. Division was split in two is still ignored by Churchill) could have been organized to advance on a four-mile front, across difficult country, up hill for 1½ miles. Nor does he explain how supplies could have been got to the men (no mules had been landed at the time when Churchill expected the advance could begin) had such an advance been made or whether, after these efforts, in his opinion the troops would have been in any condition to withstand a Turkish counter attack. It is noticeable that, although nothing even approaching this

¹ The World Crisis, 839.
² Ibid., p. 840-1.
feat was attempted by the aggressive Hunter-Weston at Hellas, Churchill does not censure him as he does Stopford, for thwarting Hamilton's plan.

Along with many writers since, Churchill makes far too much of Hamilton's interventions late on the 8th. In fact he devotes more space to this incident than to the events of any other day of the battle. He describes the meeting between Hamilton and Stopford on the Jonquil, the result of which was that "the Commander-in-Chief determined to visit the Divisional Headquarters on shore and see for himself. General Stopford did not accompany him." Originally Churchill added to the sentence, "he preferred to remain where he was. He wanted to give his leg [injured the day before] a chance." Later he deleted this section, apparently considering that by this time his opinion of Stopford was obvious enough without adding injury to insult.

It is not surprising to learn that Churchill considers that Hamilton's intervention could have had decisive results on the battle had the brigade ordered reached the heights in time. However, it should be noted that the force ordered on to the ridge was only a brigade and it is hardly possible that even had it reached the heights, it would have been able to withstand an attack by the two Turkish divisions which were rapidly approaching the area. In fact the battle was not lost by Hammersly and Stopford; nor by the inexperienced troops of the 10th. and 11th. Divisions; but by the over-ambitious nature of the plan. But this is a factor not mentioned in The World Crisis.

It is surprising to find that the futile and bloody attempts to advance at Suvla during the remainder of August are covered in some detail by Churchill. Perhaps he is trying to emphasize the high cost that was paid for the failure to advance on the 7th. and 8th. Another lesson could

(1) The World Crisis, p. 841-3.
(2) Ibid., p. 842.
(4) The World Crisis, p. 842-3.
(5) Ibid., p. 844-5.
be drawn from these actions and that is that Stopford, who deprecated any attempt to advance after the failure on the 9th., had a truer view of the likelihood of success than Hamilton, under whose orders these attempts were made. But no criticism of Hamilton is to be found in these pages.

In one respect Churchill's account of the August battles contains a fundamental contradiction. At the beginning of the chapter he says, "The British did not possess any of the preponderance necessary for an offensive. Once their attack was fully disclosed and battle was joined along the whole front, there was no reasonable expectation of their being able to defeat the Turkish Army". Yet this statement is contradicted by the whole thrust of the remainder of the chapter. We have already seen how he considered the Anzac attack came close to decisive results on the 9th. He also says that the decision to place the Turkish reserves marching on Suvla under Mustapha Kemal confided in that officer "the vital fortunes of the whole of the Ottoman Empire", certainly an indication that he considered important issues were at stake. What appears to have happened is that Churchill's first assessment, based on the numbers involved on either side, has been overtaken by the excitement generated by his descriptions of the battles until he has been convinced by his own rhetoric and love of drama that this assessment was wrong.

At the end of this Suvla chapter Churchill includes a table of the numbers of Turkish troops occupying the Peninsula and British troops available for an attack, at various dates from February to August. This replaced a long summary of the naval operation and its prospects with which Churchill originally concluded the chapter. Small sections of the latter were included in a later chapter called "The Consequences of 1915". The rest was omitted. However most of this material made points already

(1) The World Crisis, p. 829.
(2) Ibid., p. 836.
(3) Ibid., p. 847.
(4) Churchill Papers 8/91.
covered - no doubt this is the explanation of why it was excluded. Indeed even the table of troop strengths makes the same case that Churchill has been developing from the beginning of the Dardanelles chapters. However, a summary of the case against Churchill's argument may be useful. In the table, Churchill identifies three "favourable occasions" on which success should have been assured. The first is on February 18th. when he states that only 5,000 Turkish troops were on the Peninsula and 36,000 allied troops available for the attack. It will be remembered however that at this time Churchill was assuring his colleagues that troops would not be needed for the purpose of fighting on the Peninsula and it seems hardly appropriate for him in retrospect to identify this as an ideal time for an assault. Furthermore, the 36,000 troops available were the partly-trained Anzacs, a force Churchill said at the time was not capable of even "mopping up" operations without a stiffening of regulars. The second occasion is on March 20th. when Churchill says the relative numbers were 14,000 Turks and 60,000 Allied troops. Although Churchill mentions that uncertain weather was a factor at this time, he obviously underrates it because it is clear that he thinks a landing was possible. In fact, the weather was so bad during the next few weeks that this assumption of Churchill is extremely doubtful. Also, although the odds in favour of the Allies were 4 to 1, the landings in April showed that even major landings could be held up by relatively small numbers of troops. Moreover, and this a crucial point that Churchill's table ignores, the Turkish troops listed only had to delay the landings long enough to enable reserves to be brought up. In other words, the Turkish figures are minimums, the Allied maximums. Finally Churchill's third set of figures for July 7th. 70-75,000 Turks to 150,000 Allied

(1) All references are to The World Crisis, p. 847.
troops, presumes that the Allied preparations for battle would not have provoked an equivalent Turkish response and also over-estimates the Allied total by counting all the Divisions at full strength, when some of them had little over 50% effective.

The chapters of The World Crisis under consideration once more demonstrate the weaknesses of Churchill as a writer on military events. In discussing the June and July battles at Hellas he always assumes that because on occasion small numbers of troops broke through the Turkish lines, victory was imminent. As has been shown this argument ignores the difficult in pushing through sufficient reserves to turn a local success into a decisive event, ignores any counter-moves which could have been made by the Turks to prevent a collapse of their line, and over-rates the strategic value of any objectives likely to have been achieved if the British had indeed broken through.

The extremely theoretical nature of Churchill's "battle pieces" is most evident in his account of the August battles. At Anzac he has troops "leap-frogging" through the exhausted Anzac formations on to Sari Bair when it is clear that such a move was impossible because of the nature of the country, the inexperience of the troops and the fact that many of the columns could not even estimate their position with any accuracy. At Suvla, Churchill's account ignores the considerable difficulties facing Stopford and merely assumes, one suspects by measuring distances on a map, that all the objectives could have been easily attained. Common factors in his descriptions of both battles are the neglect of important detail (the dislocation of the landing of the 10th. Division, the activities of the relieving columns at Anzac on August 8th.) and the heavy reliance on eyewitness accounts of dubious value (Allanson and Aspinall). Finally, Churchill once more assumes that the capture of the immediate objectives at Anzac and Suvla could be equated with the victorious conclusion of the campaign when this was far from being the case.
Two themes have been carried through from earlier chapters. Hamilton is again treated in a remarkably generous way. The vacillating nature of his requests for reinforcements is ignored as a factor in delaying their arrival; the fact that Hamilton fought pure battles of attrition at Hellas is overlooked by Churchill despite his sharp condemnation of such battles on the Western Front; the planning of the August attack is not discussed and the reader is not made aware of the fact that the plan was too ambitious to have any chance of success. In the last instance Churchill is therefore able to make Stopford the scapegoat for failure.

The second theme is Churchill's harsh treatment of de Robeck. The Admiral is reproached for not attempting another attack on the "weakened" straits defences and the entire blame is placed upon him for the abandonment of the Bulair option, Hamilton's objections to this same operation being passed over without comment.

This section of The World Crisis also demonstrates the classic weakness of the case for the easterners. Churchill refuses to acknowledge that because the major British commitment was to the Western Front, the French, with by far the largest army in that theatre, would dictate the main thrust of British strategy. Thus any attempt to start a major campaign elsewhere than the Western Front could only succeed if the French acquiesced. When they did not the British found themselves in the situation of having to fight in the west despite many misgivings as to the final result. In The World Crisis instead of recognizing the fundamental cause of this dilemma Churchill seeks a scapegoat in Kitchener whom he continually blames for "failing to choose", when in fact a choice had already been made.

Note on Churchill and Russia in 1916

One further point should be made even though it is not really
connected with the subject matter of this chapter. In the chapter entitled "The Effort of the New Administration" Churchill prints a long paper ("A Further Note Upon the General Military Situation") written by him on June 18th. The central point of this paper is that Britain and France did not have the numerical superiority to secure a decision against Germany in 1916 and, therefore, the correct policy to be followed was to re-equip for the 1916 campaign the only power with the numbers available to obtain a break through, Russia. Two propositions have to be considered in relation to this argument. The first is that it assumes that the Allies were in a position to re-equip the Russian armies in 1916. This was hardly the case for they had insufficient shells, machine guns, heavy artillery for their own purposes. Also, even had the equipment been available, the shipping necessary to transport it to Russia was not available. Finally, the argument presupposes that a route to Russia would have been open. That is, that the Dardanelles Campaign had been brought to a successful conclusion! The second proposition is that a rifle or a machine gun in the hands of the Russian soldier was somehow better than the same weapons in British or French hands. In fact, almost the opposite was the case. The British and French soldier had the organization of a sophisticated industrial state behind him. This organization, unlike the Russian, was much more likely to be able to repair damaged weapons, place wounded soldiers back in the firing line and transport heavy weapons to the appropriate places in the line. The generally higher degree of education among the Allied troops also enabled them to make better use of the more sophisticated weapons available. In fact, the only argument in favour of Churchill's "solution" is that from a British and French point of view, less of their own troops would be killed and more Russians. But this did not mean that the war would be won.

(1) The World Crisis, p. 801-808.
(2) Ibid., p. 807.
Hitherto it has been necessary to construct a chronological account of the Dardanelles Campaign in order to consider Churchill's heavily documented and detailed exposition. The period from September to December at the Dardanelles however, receives only sketchy treatment from Churchill. Three chapters in all are devoted to the period but one of these is more concerned with events in the Balkans and a good proportion of another is devoted to a survey of the naval war. Furthermore the remainder, which does deal with the Dardanelles, is often taken up by lengthy memoranda written by Churchill, which, considering his diminished influence at this time, are often irrelevant to the main course of events. In these circumstances it has not been thought appropriate to embark on a detailed account of the complicated and often confusing incidents which characterize the period. Instead, the following course of action is proposed. Firstly, in order to give a coherent overall view of this stage of the campaign, it is intended to begin the chapter with a brief summary of the main events. Then, those topics in Churchill's account which have caused controversy or are of some importance will be selected for more detailed discussion. Finally, as Balkan affairs impinge more closely on events at the Dardanelles during this period it has been thought appropriate to conclude the chapter with an examination of Churchill's attitudes to the Balkans.

It has already been related how, after the failure of the Suvla attack, Hamilton's request for substantial reinforcements was turned down by the Dardanelles Committee on the grounds that all troops were needed for the battle in France. Shortly after this however the fortunes of the campaign seemed to improve when the French Government announced that they were preparing an army of four divisions for the East. It was to be commanded by General Sarrail and operate on the Asiatic side of the Straits. The French plan was welcomed by the British but it soon transpired
that Joffre was opposed to the move and this opposition eventually proved decisive. Later in October the disturbing news of the Bulgarian mobilization reached London. On the 6th, Bulgaria had signed a pact with Austria-Hungary and Germany and plans for a combined attack on Serbia had been canvassed. When the intentions of the Central Powers became known, Serbia appealed to Greece for aid under the terms of a pre-war treaty and Greece appealed to Britain and France for troops to enable her to fulfill her obligations to Serbia. Two divisions (one British, one French) were eventually despatched from the Dardanelles to Salonica. However, before more than the advanced guard of these formations had arrived the pro-allied Venizelos Government fell and was replaced by a more neutralist administration which immediately repudiated its treaty obligation to Serbia. The British now argued that the raison d'être of the Salonica plan no longer existed but suggested that six divisions be sent to the East to be used in accordance with the developing situation. The French, however, insisted that the British adhere to the original plan and under the threat of resignation of Joffre they reluctantly agreed.

Meanwhile the War Council had decided to recall Hamilton, who it was felt, had lost the confidence of the troops. General Monro was sent from the Western Front to report on the future of the campaign. Monro favoured evacuation, especially as Bulgaria had now entered the war on the German side thus opening a direct route from Germany to Turkey. Kitchener refused to accept this decision before seeing the situation at Gallipoli at first hand. He arrived at the Dardanelles on November 9th. and soon came to the same conclusion as Monro. An alternative plan for landing the Gallipoli force at Ayas Bay near Alexandretta was rejected by the reconstituted Dardanelles Committee, now called the War Committee. They also turned down a proposal to retain the bridgehead at Hellas for naval reasons and opted for complete evacuation. At this point Admiral de Robeck returned to England on leave. The naval command passed to Wemyss who
immediately offered to renew the naval attack. Perhaps as a result of this new resolve the Cabinet overthrew the decision of the War Committee and decided that the whole question of evacuation should be examined at a conference with the French. At that conference the French, with Russian and Italian support, insisted that Gallipoli should be evacuated and resources concentrated on the defence of Salonica. Despite further attempts by Wemyss to convince the War Committee that a renewed naval attack was feasible the British adhered to the agreed policy. Anzac and Suvla were evacuated on December 19th. and 20th. and Hellas on January 8th. Surprisingly, in view of the forecasts of up to fifty percent losses, there was hardly a casualty. The Dardanelles Campaign was at an end.

In The World Crisis only the barest outline of the events summarized above is given. Six main topics have therefore been identified as being worthy of further discussion. These are, Churchill's role in the origin of the Salonica expedition, his attitude towards a new naval attack at the Dardanelles, his discussion of the role of British submarines in the campaign, his comments on the missions of Monro and Kitchener to the East and his account of the final decision to evacuate the Peninsula. It will also be necessary to comment briefly on the summary of the naval war with which Churchill concludes his Dardanelles chapters.¹

The first area of controversy is Churchill's handling of the origin of the Salonica expedition. He states that

"As a military measure to aid Serbia directly, the landing... at Salonika was absurd. The hostile armies concentrating on

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¹ In The World Crisis there is a generally reliable account of the Sarrail Affair, which was taken entirely from Churchill's evidence to the Dardanelles Commission. (See Churchill Papers 8/92 and The World Crisis, p. 858-9.) Originally however Churchill had included a much longer section of some 13 pages on Sarrail and the origins of the French expedition to the east. Eventually this was cut down to two pages which appear in The World Crisis. Nothing really substantial was lost by this contraction and the emphasis in the published version is the same as in the draft. Some forceful paragraphs of Churchillian prose however have been lost, one of which may be included here. It is concerned with the French governments anxiety that Sarrail should be removed from Paris. "What was to be done? Obviously a new command must be found for the outraged "Lion of the Argonne" and Lion of the Socialist Left. But where? One could hardly invent a new war for the purpose. Suddenly a brilliant inspiration seized the anxious Cabinet. Why should Sarrail not go to the Dardanelles." Churchill Papers 8/92.
the eastern and northern frontiers of Serbia were certain to
overwhelm and overrun that country before any effective aid,
other than Greek aid, could possibly arrive. As a political
move to encourage and determine the action of Greece, the
despawn of allied troops to Salonika was justified. But the
question arose: Where were the troops to come from? Obviously
from the Dardanelles and only from the Dardanelles. A French
and a British division, all that could be spared and all that
could get to Salonika in time, were accordingly taken from Sir
Ian Hamilton's hard-pressed army in the closing days of
September.¹

Churchill goes on to say that "The reader who has a true sense of the values
in the problem will not be surprised to learn that this despawn of troops
from the Dardanelles produced the opposite effect to that intended or
desired."² He claims that the Greeks became concerned that the Dardanelles
were about to be abandoned and that this made them more determined than
ever not to intervene.³ He concludes that after the change of government
in Greece "the object of the expedition to Salonika had entirely disappeared"
and that from then on "I continued to point to the Dardanelles as the master
key to the problem."⁴

It is difficult, from the passages quoted to discern what Churchill's
own role in the Salonica decision was, or whether he was in agreement with
the policy adopted. On the one hand he says that the original decision was
justified on political grounds and the only troops that could reach
Salonica in time were those from the Dardanelles. On the other hand he
says that it was obvious that the move had the opposite effect on Greece to
that intended. He is careful, however to frame this point in such a way
as to avoid saying that he thought it obvious at the time. What then was
Churchill's Salonica policy?

The question of definite aid to Greece and Serbia first came before the
War Council on September 23rd. After a discussion of what aid could be sent,

¹ The World Crisis, p. 864.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid., p. 865.
⁴ Ibid.
Churchill said that
"there would be no great opportunity to clear up the situation in the Dardanelles until about the 15th. December... It would then be the wet weather and Suvla Bay would be difficult to hold... (if the French Asiatic plan did not develop) it seemed sounder to him to abandon the Suvla "extension" and to hold Anzacs and Hellas... This would enable us to extract four divisions from a bad position in marshy country and use these divisions to strengthen and occupy the uncontested zone (in Serbia) in order to prevent the whole of the Balkans going by the run."

Later he said that "by sending four divisions now rotting at Suvla we might be able to prevent the Austro-German incursion". Thus Churchill was strongly in favour of sending troops to Salonica and it was he who first suggested that a portion of Hamilton's force be used for this purpose. There is no mention of this facet of Churchill's Salonica policy in _The World Crisis_ and to this extent his account is incomplete. As for his argument that the weakening of Gallipoli affected the Greek resolve, it is extremely doubtful if events at Gallipoli weighed greatly with them. All their actions seemed to be governed by events on the major war fronts and not by what was taking place at the Dardanelles.

Eventually Churchill's plan to occupy part of Serbian Macedonia as a guarantee to Bulgaria was rejected by the War Council. Presumably it was thought that an expedition to save Serbia which forcibly occupied a section of her territory and promised it to her sworn enemy was not likely to further the British cause in the Balkans. There is no mention of this plan in _The World Crisis_ and it is clear that Churchill's account of this incident has been carefully constructed to avoid revealing exactly what his policy was. The reason for this is obvious. Churchill would not want to be identified with the inception of such a fruitless campaign as Salonica. In addition he would not want it known that he once considered emasculating Hamilton's force in favour of the Balkan plan because he considered the force at Gallipoli to be rotting. Finally he may not have wished the anti-Serb

(1) Dardanelles Committee Minutes 23/9/15, Cab. 42/3/28.
(2) Ibid.
aspects of his policy known.

Churchill's account is much more reliable in dealing with the development of his Salonica policy after the Greek change of government. He claims in The World Crisis that from this point on he opposed strenuously sending troops to Salonica and this claim is borne out by the documents. For example, on October 6th. he told the Dardanelles Committee that "it appeared to him that there was no chance of saving the general situation in the Balkans. The only question was whether there was still time to save the situation in Gallipoli." However on October 15th. he stated "I believe that the gaining of Greece and Roumania to our side now is a more urgent and more important objective than forcing the Dardanelles" but this policy seems to have been an aberration from Churchill's general line which was, as stated in The World Crisis, to focus attention back to the Dardanelles. (It is interesting to note that from this memorandum dealing with the Salonica question sections of which are quoted in The World Crisis, Churchill has omitted the words underlined from the following passage, "Anzac is the greatest word in the history of Australasia. Is it for ever to carry to future generations of Australians and New Zealanders memories of forlorn heroism and of sacrifices made in vain at the incapable bidding of the British Government?"

Perhaps he considered it inadvisable for the Dominions to become aware of these sentiments or he may have considered that there was a danger that he would be numbered among the incapable.)

The second area of controversy to be dealt with by Churchill is the matter of a renewed naval attack on the Narrows. He quotes his letter to Balfour of October 6th. in which he advocated renewing the naval attack and suggested that "even a few ships in the Marmora would absolutely cut off the Turkish Army and relieve us of all our difficulties". He then

(1) Dardanelles Committee Minutes 6/10/15, Cab. 42/4/3.
(3) See Churchill Papers 8/155 and The World Crisis, p. 874.
(4) Churchill to Balfour 6/10/15, quoted The World Crisis, p. 866.
chronicles the return of Keyes to London in late October and quotes with approval the Keyes plan. Essentially Churchill says, this plan was for a squadron of the oldest battleships, fitted with mine bumpers and preceded by the best sweepers, to rush the Narrows and attack the forts in reverse. Meanwhile, of the remaining two squadrons, one would attack from below the Narrows and the other bombard from across the Peninsula. This triple assault was to be continued until the forts had been silenced and the Turkish Army cut off from its base. Finally he lists, again with approval the various attempts by Wemyss to have the naval attack renewed. The questions that now have to be asked are, did the naval attack stand any more chance of success in the later months of 1915 that it did in February and March? and, if it succeeded would it have done what its supporters claimed, namely cut off the Turkish Army from its supplies?

Whether the Keyes variation on the Carden plan would have achieved success is as much a matter for speculation as whether a renewed attack would have succeeded after March 18th. Two features of the Keyes plan should however be noted. The first is that is doubtful if the mine bumpers fitted to the ships would have proved effective, for an efficient anti-mine device, the paravane, was not developed until 1918. Also it seems doubtful whether the squadron firing across the Peninsula could have achieved much, considering that each gun in the forts had to be hit and given the limited quantities of ammunition available. In fact the whole plan really depended on the mine sweepers ahead of the fleet remaining in position through the entire rush, for the chances of a ship hitting a mine in an unswept field were 99 in 100. However, as has been shown in a previous chapter, the minefield defences were, even in October, a formidable obstacle and the odds were surely against the sweepers getting through unscathed. Furthermore, Wemyss' confidence stemmed partly from his view that the efficiency of

(1) The World Crisis, p. 880-2.
(2) Ibid., p. 888-891.
(3) Mitchell Committee Report, p. 72.
the minefields had been much reduced during the occupation period.\(^1\) According to the Mitchell Committee this view was incorrect, the mines remaining in place to the end of the campaign. A further aspect of the plan has been questioned by another authority. Admiral Dewar has stated that "the contoured map shows that the forts in the Narrows could not be taken in reverse and were not open to direct fire from the northward."\(^2\) This, it will be remembered, was a crucial aspect of the Keyes plan.

What, if the Fleet had got into the Marmora? Could it have starved out the Turkish Army on Gallipoli? Keyes and his supporters considered that all Turkish communications with the Peninsula could have been cut.\(^3\) Others held a different view. De Robeck pointed out that only one of the roads along the Bulair isthmus could be controlled by the navy and then only by day. A second road was out of sight from the sea and could only be bombarded with continual aerial reconnaissance, which was an impossibility due to the distance of Bulair from the nearest island airfield.\(^4\) Another problem was the difficulty of preventing supplies reaching the Turks across the Narrows at night. In addition, it is doubtful if the Fleet could have maintained itself in the Marmora for a long enough period to starve out the Turks. To remain in the Marmora the Fleet would have to have been accompanied by unarmoured colliers and supply ships, which faced a much more hazardous journey than that facing the armoured ships.\(^5\) Once more, the naval prospects seem hardly commensurate with the risks.

One further aspect of the problem of severing Turkish Communications with the Peninsula is discussed by Churchill. This is the activities and influence of British submarines in the Marmora. The adventures of these craft are colourfully retold by Churchill thus gratifying his desire to

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\(^1\) Wemyss to Jackson 15/12/15, Jackson Papers, Ministry of Defence, London.


\(^3\) Keyes to de Robeck 18/10/15, Keyes Papers 5/17.

\(^4\) De Robeck to C - in C - Med Force 30/10/15, Adm. 137/2168.

\(^5\) Limpus to de Robeck 12/11/15, Limpus Papers, MS/75/139.
enliven his account with stirring tales. Rather surprisingly, in view of his other attitudes, he does not go as far as some other commentators and claim that submarines alone could have starved the Turks out. However Churchill does say that the submarines virtually stopped Turkish Sea communications. In fact the submarines were only ever partially effective. They were not able to stop most of the sea traffic at night and the Turks increasingly adopted the expedient of using shallow draft vessels which were not vulnerable to submarines. Submarines were of course of limited use in blocking the land routes. It is significant that not even Keyes thought that submarines alone could have stopped Turkish supplies.

We now come to one of the most controversial incidents described in this section of The World Crisis. This is the visit of General Monro to Gallipoli to report on the future of the Campaign. Churchill introduces Monro by saying 'He belonged to that school whose supreme conception of Great War strategy was 'killing Germans'. Anything that killed Germans was right. Anything that did not kill Germans was useless.' He then goes on to describe Monro's visit to Gallipoli in a classic passage which must be quoted at length.

"General Monro's report was awaited with the utmost anxiety. There was however no need for suspense. General Monro was an officer of swift decision. He came, he saw, he capitulated. He reached the Dardanelles on October 28; and already on the 29th he and his staff were discussing nothing but evacuation. On the 30th he landed on the Peninsula. Without going beyond the Beaches, he familiarized himself in the space of six hours with the conditions prevailing on the 15-mile front of Anzac, Suvla and Helles, and spoke a few discouraging words to the principal officers at each point. To the Divisional Commanders summoned to meet him at their respective Corps Headquarters, he put separately and in turn a question in the following sense: 'On the supposition that you are going to get no more drafts can you maintain your position in spite of the arrival of strong reinforcements with heavy guns and limitless German ammunition? He thus collected a

(2) For example Hamilton. See Hamilton to de Robeck 2/9/15, Adm. 137/2168.
(3) The World Crisis, p. 820.
(4) De Robeck to C in C Med-Force 30/10/15, Adm. 137/2168.
(6) The World Crisis, p. 877.
number of dubious answers, armed with which he returned to Imbros. He never again set foot on the Peninsula during the tenure of his command. His Chief-of-the-Staff, also an enthusiast for evacuation, never visited it at all. On October 31 General Monro despatched his telegram recommending the total evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula and the final abandonment of the campaign. According to his own statements he contemplated, in addition to the ruin of the whole enterprise, a loss of from thirty to forty per cent. of the Army, i.e., about forty thousand officers and men. This he was prepared to accept. Two days later he left for Egypt, leaving the command of the Dardanelles Army temporarily in the hands of General Birdwood.¹

Before the content of this passage is examined, several points should be made about the way it was written. The final version owed much to an unknown proofreader (perhaps Aspinall or Hamilton) who suggested after reading an early draft that Churchill had not made enough of Monro's visit.² Churchill then expanded the material concerned with Monro's tour of the Peninsula and included a sentence suggested by the proofreader to the effect that Monro's Chief of Staff Lynden Bell had never visited the Peninsula at all.³

When Sir John Edmonds saw this chapter in proof he commented,

"Monro was by no means a man of 'fixed ideas and rapid decision' [this had been Churchill's original phrase]⁴ He was (in 1914-18) a man of considerable [ability?] a 'character' who thought things out carefully & then acted. As commander of the 2nd. Division no one enjoyed more the confidence of [those?] under him. He was looked on by many as the most suitable successor to French in Command of the B.E.F....Six hours ashore was ample. What good could he do by wandering around more trenches when he could see all he wanted to see from the water."⁵

Churchill ignored most of the advice contained in this letter. The only concession made was that the words "fixed ideas" were removed from one of the opening sentences. He was by no means ready to forgive so easily the man who had "ruined" the whole enterprise. Some unflattering references to Monro were eventually omitted from The World Crisis. The first reads

¹ The World Crisis, p. 878.
² Churchill Papers 8/155.
³ Ibid.
⁴ See Churchill Papers 8/155.
⁵ Edmonds to Churchill 20/7/23, Churchill Papers 8/183.
"It is creditably stated that the heads of the report summarizing General Monro's conclusions were being drafted concurrently with his tour of the Beaches."¹ Churchill obtained this story from either Hamilton or Aspinall. There is a report in the Hamilton papers of a conversation between Hamilton, Aspinall, Commander Wedgwood (a Churchill supporter who witnessed the April 25th. landing from the bridge of the River Clyde) and Roch, (one of the Dardanelles Commissioners) in which Aspinall told of the incident.² Eventually, Churchill left out this anecdote. Perhaps he considered his material against Monro damning enough already. A second anti-Monro anecdote was also deleted by Churchill. He intended to include in a footnote on p. 878, Oriel Williams' description of Monro's stay in Cairo, in which Williams laid much emphasis on the opulence of Monro's suite of rooms at Shepherds and described in ironic terms the progress of the champagne dinner which was interrupted by news of Monro's supercession by Kitchener.³

This section also contains an interesting illustration of how Churchill laboured to create one of his famous phrases. In summing up Monro's decision to evacuate he first wrote "He came, he saw, he scuttled".⁴ He then crossed through "scuttled" and substituted "surrendered", "He came, he saw, he surrendered".⁵ Finally he inserted "capitulated" for "surrendered" and produced the infinitely better - because of its alliterative coincidence with the original - "He came, he saw, he capitulated".⁶

We must now turn to the substance of Churchill's charges against Monro. He makes three main points; that Monro had already made up his mind on evacuation before he had objectively assessed the situation; that his visit to the Peninsula was too short to obtain a proper perspective; and that his decision to evacuate was wrong.

(1) Churchill Papers 8/155. The passage came after the sentence ending "never visited it at all" on p. 878.
(4) Churchill Papers 8/93.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Ibid.
In fact Monro's first action when he reached the Dardanelles, indicated that he had not yet decided on evacuation. He telegraphed to Kitchener asking for experienced company commanders, material for shell-proof covers, and reinforcements for the territorial divisions; he stated that he was much impressed by the physique and military bearing of the Anzacs. This telegram contradicts the thrust of Aspinall's report on Monro given earlier and Aspinall's further recollection that Lynden Bell had said "There is no question about the evacuation; that is entirely determined; what we require, and must have, is local backing". Of course Monro's telegram to Kitchener could have been sent to make it appear that Monro was still undecided as it would have been exceedingly impolitic for Monro to have mentioned evacuation in his first communication with Kitchener, written only a few hours after his arrival. In these circumstances no final decision is possible but it should be noted that Churchill does not mention Monro's telegram of the 28th. Furthermore the vital facts needed to decide on the future of the campaign (the Government's commitment to the operation, the number of troops likely to be sent in future) were available in London and did not need an on-the-spot assessment and to this extent Churchill's criticism misses the point.

In criticizing Monro for the precipitate nature of his decision, Churchill has neglected to mention that it was Kitchener who "forced the pace". After receiving Monro's first telegram he replied "Please send me as soon as possible your report on the main issue at the Dardanelles, namely, leaving or staying". This forced Monro to set out for the Peninsula at once and to produce his report just 36 hours later. It is clear that he would have preferred more time and he complained to his military secretary that he did not consider Kitchener's demand for a decision either.

(1) Monro to Kitchener 28/10/15, G.H.Q. War Diary, W.O. 95/4265.
(2) Report of a conversation between Aspinall, Roch, Wedgwood and Hamilton 8/1/19.
(3) James R.R., Gallipoli, p. 323.
(4) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 401.
"fair or reasonable". Concerning the small amount of time spent on the Peninsula, Edmonds' point that the positions were so small they could virtually be seen at a glance seems a reasonable one. Also Monro must have had a good idea of the beachheads from studying maps and charts on the way out.

Was then Monro's decision correct? One of the first documents studied by Monro on his arrival at Gallipoli was an appreciation drawn up by Aspinall. The conclusion reached in this document was that a fresh offensive could not be carried out before the spring of 1916 because of the weather. Aspinall then stated that for good progress to be made an advance on either side of the Straits was necessary and for this 400,000 men plus 20% for drafts would be needed. This was hardly an encouraging document, for Monro must have been aware that there was no chance of troops in this number being made available for the east in 1916. There were other discouraging opinions. Dawnay had drawn up an appreciation decidedly gloomy in tone and two of the Corps Commanders, Byng and Davies, had told Monro that they considered evacuation advisable. Only Birdwood was in favour of holding on although even he admitted that he could not see how good progress could be made. Thus there was a substantial body of local opinion which favoured evacuation. However evacuation was not likely to be free of cost. Aspinall had mentioned that such an operation would probably cost 40,000-50,000 men, two-thirds of the guns and all the stores and these figures seemed to have been generally accepted. Monro has therefore been blamed by Churchill for coolly contemplating a loss on this scale. But Churchill does not provide evidence to suggest that Monro was the type of officer who would have viewed losses of this size with equanimity. Also the

(2) Untitled appreciation by Aspinall 22/10/15, W.O. 158/575.
(3) Appreciation by Dawnay 30/10/15, Dawnay Papers, Box 17.
(5) Birdwood to Kitchener 2/11/15, Birdwood Papers, AWM File 419/10/7, Box 213.
(6) Appreciation by Aspinall 22/10/15, W.O. 158/575.
likely loss during evacuation had to be balanced against the loss involved in holding on. From October 23rd. until the beginning of the Suvla and Anzac evacuation the casualty rate was approximately 860 per week. At this rate holding on through the winter would have cost about 15,000 casualties, some of whom would have been able to fight again. However to this figure must be added losses from sickness. During October this total was averaging 750 per day, some of whom would never fight again. Sickness from dysentery could be expected to drop with the onset of winter but other complaints such as frostbite, which could permanently incapacitate a man, would rise. Thus the balance sheet was by no means as one-sided as Churchill suggests.

There were, in addition, other good reasons for evacuation. All along the line the Turks held the advantage of position and the winter would have been an unpleasant prospect for the British holding the lower slopes. All chance of surprise, short of another landing, had gone and another landing could not have been sustained by the Fleet. The local commanders then were faced with the prospect of making a series of frontal attacks in order to break through and it had been demonstrated time and again that this form of operation was futile. Furthermore, without the numbers mentioned by Aspinall there was no hope of building up the superiority necessary to defeat the 200,000 Turkish troops in the near vicinity of the Peninsula. But even if reinforcements in the numbers suggested by Aspinall were provided it is not clear how the navy could have supplied them. If the force remained on the defensive the question of the value of the exercise has to be asked. No doubt the force was tying down a considerable proportion of the Turkish Army but this could have been accomplished with much less loss if the British had adopted a defensive stance along the line of the Suez Canal. All these points were made in a memorandum written by Monro in November. In retro-

(1) Dardanelles Commission, Dardanelles Casualties, Weekly M.E.F. Reports, Cab. 19/31.
(2) Aspinall-Oglander, Gallipoli V.2, p. 389.
(3) Memorandum by Monro 12/11/15, W.O. 158/578.
spect his arguments seem unanswerable but Churchill ignores these points in The World Crisis and concentrates only on the ruin of the campaign. In one respect only is he probably correct. He states in The World Crisis that the Turks could have expected little help from the Germans in the provision of heavy artillery or ammunition. The evacuationists disagreed with this view and dwelt at length on the horrific effects the German guns would have on the British positions. However, it seems unlikely that the Germans would have withdrawn significant quantities of heavy artillery, of which like all armies they were short, from their main fronts. In any case transporting the guns to Gallipoli must have taken a considerable time and it is probable that few additional guns could have arrived before the end of the winter.

It will be remembered that following Monro's decision in favour of evacuation Kitchener visited Gallipoli to see the situation for himself. Churchill's description of this mission is misleading on several counts. Firstly, he gives the impression that Kitchener was in favour of holding on by saying that "His personal inspection of the troops and the defences convinced him that the troops could hold their positions unless confronted with very heavy German reinforcements". This was true but it did not mean that Kitchener thought the troops should hold on. In fact he soon endorsed Monro's view, with the exception that he bowed to de Robeck's opinion that Hellas should be retained. Secondly, the Ayas Bay plan was not of Kitchener's devising as stated by Churchill. According to Orlo Williams and Dawnay the plan was invented by the staff as a sop to those who could not face evacuation direct and who were concerned about the defence of Egypt e.g. Maxwell and Kitchener. The idea was that the plan would never be carried out

(1) The World Crisis, p. 870-72.
(2) See Monro's appreciation quoted above.
(3) The World Crisis, p. 883.
(4) Kitchener to Asquith 15/11/15, Cab. 42/5/20.
(5) The World Crisis, p. 883.
but would serve as a means of getting general agreement on evacuation.\(^1\)

"Kitchener's" alternative scheme was eventually rejected by the Government which opted for complete evacuation. In *The World Crisis* Churchill strongly condemns this decision. He states that although the Government were able to contemplate the loss of 40,000 to 50,000 men they would not sanction a renewal of the naval attack which might cost only a handful of men and a few old battleships,\(^2\) and he sums up his opinion of their attitude in a memorable phrase, "The determination of the British Government to give in at all costs was now inflexible".\(^3\) This is hardly a fair summary of the difficulties which faced the Cabinet. All their naval advisors (except the relatively junior Keyes) had assured them that evacuation was their only option. This advice was reinforced by the overwhelming majority of military opinion. The Government were also aware of the cost of maintaining a force on Gallipoli, though Churchill apparently was not. It would have been a brave or perhaps foolhardy government which ignored the advice of its military experts. In short although the decision to evacuate was a difficult one to make it is hard to see how anything else could have been done.

This section of *The World Crisis* is concluded by Churchill with a short survey of the naval war. He identifies two schools of naval thought; the "passive school", which saw the navy's role as subsidiary to the army and advocated the husbanding of naval resources for the Great battle.

"The opposite view was that the Navy was a gigantic instrument of offensive war, capable of intervening with decisive effect in the general strategy".\(^4\) This fundamental misconception appears repeatedly in *The World Crisis*. Churchill fails to see that Germany, without a vulnerable sea coast and with an army running into millions, was practically immune to offensive

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(1) See Williams O., *The Evacuation of the Dardanelles*, p. 661; Dawnay to Aspinall-Oglander 1/2/32 and 5/2/32; Dawnay Papers, Box 15.
(2) *The World Crisis*, p. 891-2.
(3) Ibid., p. 892.
(4) Ibid., p. 897.
operations by the Fleet. In fact Turkey was the only one of the Central Powers with an open sea coast and a small navy and given Churchill's views it seems almost inevitable that he should have attempted to use the navy against her. The theory of "knocking away the props" was then developed to justify this policy. Churchill believes that by the destruction of just one prop, Turkey, the War could have been won in 1915 or early 1916 and he goes on to blame the dominance of the passive school for allowing the Germans 30 months of war to develop their submarine offensive without interruption. However it is yet to be explained how Turkey was propping up Germany or how her defeat would have encompassed the collapse of the German Army in the West. This is the major weakness of the "Eastern strategy" and Churchill never convincingly explains how his policies would have seriously weakened the main enemy. Furthermore, the Germans had not planned a submarine offensive on the 1917 scale from the beginning of the war. They only turned to it at the last moment as a desperate measure to save them from defeat. Finally, Churchill is moved to compare two Admirals, one from the forward and one from the passive school. The officers chosen are Beatty and de Robeck.

"Contrast his [Beatty's] attitude of mind at Jutland, when two of his six ships with 2,500 men had been blown out of existence in a few moments, with that of Admiral de Robeck - an officer of the highest physical courage - but saddened and smitten to the heart by the loss of three obsolete vessels with small loss of life in the numerous fleet which he commanded."2

The myth of de Robeck yearning after his lost ships has been dealt with in an earlier chapter. It should only be noted here that the two situations chosen by Churchill to illustrate his theme are hardly comparable. Beatty's decision at Jutland to maintain close contact with the enemy was taken in the knowledge that even with two ships sunk he had (with the 5th Battle Squadron) a good superiority and excellent chances of success. De Robeck's

(1) The World Crisis, p. 898.
(2) Ibid., p. 897.
decision was taken in the knowledge that a continuation of the attack would lead nowhere. Churchill never forgave de Robeck for that decision and in *The World Crisis* he loses no opportunity to denigrate the Admiral, while his extravagant praise of Beatty, which has already been noted as a feature of the book, continues.

There is little that is new or surprising in Churchill's final Dardanelles chapters. Given the line already adopted in *The World Crisis* they are exactly what might be expected. Thus Churchill is concerned to show that he was a consistent supporter of the campaign to the very last and to this end he conceals the fact that at one period he seemed to believe that Salonica offered better prospects for success than the Dardanelles. To the same purpose Churchill attempts to show that the decision to evacuate was wrong and that there were realistic alternatives in the form of renewed naval action. However, in the first instance the method adopted by Churchill is to denigrate the main advocate of evacuation, Monro, rather than attempting to combat Monro's arguments. Churchill also misrepresents the attitude of Kitchener towards evacuation and ignores the real difficulties faced by the Government in making their decision. As far as the naval prospects are concerned Churchill, as always, underestimates the difficulties faced by the Fleet and overestimates the likely effect of any naval success. Thus on the naval aspects of the Dardanelles operation *The World Crisis* ends exactly as it began.

**Churchill's Balkan Policy**

We now have to consider Churchill's Balkan policy as set down in *The World Crisis*. Considering his decided views on the subject, surprisingly little material on the Balkans has been included by Churchill and what there is, is scattered throughout two volumes. However the main discussion of his policy takes place in a chapter entitled "The Ruin of the Balkans" and as this is the penultimate of Churchill's "Dardanelles" chapters it seems appropriate
to consider it here.

The main features of Churchill's Balkan policy are quite clear. From the beginning of the war he favoured the creation of a Balkan Confederation of Bulgaria, Serbia, Roumania, Montinegro and Greece. He considered that this could have been achieved by the British, French and Russian governments forming a common policy and sending "plenipotentiaries of the highest order to the Balkan Peninsula to negotiate on a clear, firm basis with each and all of these States". He suggests that territory from the Austro-Hungarian and Turkish empires would have provided the enducement for the Balkan states to join the entente, "For every one there was a definite prize. For Roumania, Transylvania; for Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Dalmatia and the Banat of Temesvar; for Bulgaria, Adrianople and the Enos-Midia line; for Greece, Smyrna and its hinterland." However "to realize these advantages, certain concessions had to be made by the Balkan states among themselves. Roumania could restore the Dobrudja to Bulgaria; Serbia could liberate the Bulgarian districts of Macedonia; Greece could give Kavalla as a make-weight; and as an immediate solatium to Greece, there was Cyprus which could have been thrown into the scale."

In considering this policy one general point should be kept in mind, that British influence in the Balkans, with the possible exception of Greece, was negligible in 1914. Indeed it is hard to think of an area of the world where British influence counted for less. Trade with the area was minimal, defence links, except with the Greek navy, nil and British representation small. The embassy staff at Bucharest consisted of an ambassador and a clerk. It was therefore hardly Britain's place to take the lead in Balkan negotiations at the beginning of the War. In fact Grey did suggest the formation of a Balkan bloc and deprecated entering into

(1) The World Crisis, p. 442.
(2) Ibid., p. 850.
(3) Ibid., p. 849.
(4) Ibid., p. 849-50.
negotiations with any one state, but this policy was immediately undermined by Russia, who as the only entente power with any influence, took the lead and opened bi-lateral negotiations with Roumania. These discussions culminated in an offer of Translyvania and part of the Bukovina to Roumania in return for a declaration of neutrality. This decision of Russia's put paid to any immediate attempt to form a Balkan bloc, for Roumania had now been promised as much as she could have expected from a victorious war, and Greece and Bulgaria would not move without Roumania. Churchill does not explain how these Russian initiatives could have been prevented in an area traditionally considered to be within the Russian sphere of influence. Nor is it certain that a group of allied "plenipotentiaries" could have accomplished more in the Balkans than was achieved by the regular diplomatic representatives.

Churchill's policy also ignores the fact that these small states were, quite naturally, waiting for a sign from the battlefields as to who would emerge victorious. In the early months of the war these signs were uncertain. The German invasion in the west was offset by the Marne, Russian victories in Galicia, by Tannenburg and the Masurian Lakes. But 1915, the year in which Churchill considered Balkan negotiations could have been pursued to a successful conclusion, was dominated for these states by the succession of Russian defeats; again at the Masurian Lakes in February, at Gorlice-Tarnow in May, at Leimburg in June, at Warsaw and Brest-Litovsk in August and Grodno in September. These defeats were quite often the cause of a breakdown in negotiations with the Balkan states.


(2) Barclay to Grey 12/8/14, quoted in Ibid.

(3) Foreign Office Memorandum N.D., F.O. 371/2241.

(4) Barclay to Nicolson 14/11/14, Nicolson Papers, F.O. 800/376.


(6) e.g. Buchanan to Grey 18/2/15, giving the Russian defeat at the Masurian Lakes as the reason for the lapse in the Roumanian negotiations, F.O. 371/2243; Chirol to Grey 10/8/15, saying that the fall of Warsaw had prevented any chance of Roumanian intervention, F.O. 371/2259.
Nor were territorial ambitions as easy to reconcile as Churchill seemed to think. The concession which he suggested for Roumania was Transylvania but Bratiano (the Roumanian Prime Minister) extracted more than that from Russia by promising to remain neutral. Furthermore, as the war progressed so Roumania's price increased. In May her demands included Transylvania, the entire Bukovina to the River Prutt, the Banat of Temesvar and several Hungarian countries, about double the amount of territory suggested by Churchill as adequate compensation. A further problem was that the Banat was on the Serbian list of desiderata, and was considered essential by the Serbs to safeguard Belgrade from bombardment across the Danube. Eventually, all the allies reluctantly acceded to all Roumanian territorial demands and in addition promised to send 200,000 British and French troops to the Balkans, whereupon Roumania increased her price to all the demanded territory and 500,000 allied troops. As the British military attache pointed out the Roumanians were quite aware that it would have been impossible to supply this number of men in the Danube valley. The sincerity of their repeated assurances that they were about to enter the war must therefore be called into question. In all these negotiations there was never any suggestion on Roumania's part that she would be willing to cede the Dobrudja to Bulgaria.

Similar objections could be applied to Churchill's other suggested territorial concessions. For example, Bulgaria wanted not only the Enos-Media line, Cavalla and "Bulgarian Macedonia" but Serbian Macedonia as well, and this Serbia refused to concede. Concerning the Greeks, when Cyprus was "thrown into the scale" as suggested by Churchill, it was

(1) Dallin A. (ED), Russian Diplomacy and Eastern Europe, p. 255.
(2) Crewe to des Graz 10/7/15, F.O. 371/2261.
(3) Grey to Barclay 12/10/15, F.O. 371/2273.
(4) Barclay to Grey 16/10/15, in Ibid.
(5) Grey to Barclay 16/10/15, in Ibid.
promptly rejected as inadequate. Eventually not even the offer of Thrace was to move them.¹

Thus the formation of a Balkan bloc was not as simple as Churchill's exposition of the problem in *The World Crisis* would have us believe. Indeed this was pointed out to Churchill by Headlam-Morley before *The World Crisis* was published. After reading the proofs he wrote,

"It strikes me on reading this chapter that you hardly recognize sufficiently the difficulties of carrying through the policy which all desired, of founding a Balkan Bloc which should be either neutral or join the Entente. One has always to remember that in this part of the world England really counted very little; the Balkan States were much more influenced by Russia. And we have to remember that, for instance Bulgaria knew that a Russian victory would mean the establishment of Russia in the Straits and at Constantinople. This they did not wish."²

In a later comment he made a similar point about Roumania.³ Now, as we have seen, Headlam-Morley had been an important influence on Churchill concerning the opening diplomatic chapters of *The World Crisis* and indeed Churchill had incorporated whole sections of Headlam-Morley's memoranda into his book. In this instance Headlam-Morley was ignored. The creation of a Balkan Bloc is so central to Churchill's thinking on the Dardanelles, it being one of the events to be brought about by the successful forcing of the Straits, that he can hardly concede that it was not possible.

We must now take this investigation one stage further and ask what purpose Churchill hoped to achieve through the formation of a Balkan Confederation. Churchill states that Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Roumania disposed of armies which totalled 1,100,000 men (Serbia 250,000, Greece 300,000, Bulgaria 300,000, Roumania 350,000).⁴ He considered that "The whole of the forces of the Balkan confederation could then have been directed against the underside of Austria in the following year"⁵ and that this "must

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² Headlam-Morley to Churchill 10/1/23, Churchill Papers 8/44.
³ Headlam-Morley to Churchill 22/2/24, Churchill Papers 8/185.
⁴ The World Crisis, p. 473.
⁵ Ibid., p. 474.
have involved the downfall of Austria and Turkey and the speedy, victorious termination of the war.¹ Let us now examine this proposition. One fundamental question that has to be asked is how efficient were the Balkan armies Churchill proposed putting into the field against the Austrians and (almost certainly) the Germans. The Roumanian army may be taken as an example. In 1914 the Roumanian army was woefully deficient in modern weapons of war. It had very little heavy artillery and what there was consisted largely of obsolescent pieces.² Even the batteries of modern pattern guns were barely mobile, relying on draft oxen to pull them because of a shortage of tractors and horses.³ Machine guns were in particularly short supply. Eight divisions did not possess any machine guns at all.⁴ Those divisions with machine guns had only 12.⁵ (A German division in 1916 had up to 324 machine guns.)⁶ In 1914 only one machine gun company was added to the army⁷ and after the war began all attempts to purchase these weapons from Britain failed because of the shortages in Britain's own army.⁸ Then there was the ammunition problem. In 1914 there were only enough shells for two months serious fighting.⁹ There was only one armament factory in the country¹⁰ which could only manufacture about one round per rifle daily¹¹ and two shells per day for each cannon for the artillery.¹² Ironically, the only other source of supply was Germany since many of the guns were made by Krupp.¹³ The infantry was also in a sorry plight.

¹ The World Crisis, p. 849.
³ Kiritescu, p. 265.
⁶ Kiritescu, p. 265.
⁷ Barclay to Grey 30/6/14, F.O. 371/2089.
⁸ General Brade to Foreign Office 15/11/15, F.O. 371/2274.
⁹ Barclay to Grey 1/4/15, Adm. 137/1089.
¹⁰ Seicaru, p. 289.
¹² Seicaru, p. 289.
¹³ Kiritescu, p. 54.
Although its nominal strength was about 600,000-700,000 there were only enough rifles for 360,000.\(^1\) Almost all the men were illiterate,\(^2\) which meant company orders and the maintenance manuals for equipment could not be read. Not surprisingly, there was a complete absence of gas equipment and trench mortars.\(^3\) There were virtually no aircraft available for reconnaissance purposes.\(^4\)

The Bulgarian Army was in a somewhat better state with modern guns and a greater number of machine guns.\(^5\) However the standards of equipment were still below those of the Western European nations. Moreover, most of their soldiers were illiterate\(^6\) and had only received minimal periods of training.\(^7\)

LITTLE information has been discovered about the Greek Army. The comment has already been made that in 1914 it was changing much of its armament and was not in a fit state to take the field. It was certainly deficient in all kinds of material and as Greece had no armament industry, replacement of equipment would have been impossible.\(^8\)

These, then, were the armies which Churchill expected to advance several hundred miles over some of the most difficult country in Europe and defeat the Austrians and even more fantastically, the Germans, who although Churchill does not discuss this possibility in The World Crisis almost certainly would have come to the aid of their ally. It is clear that the primitive Balkan armies would have stood little chance against the more modern forces of the Central Powers. The fate of the Roumanian army in 1916, when the Germans overran most of the country in a campaign lasting only a few months, may be taken as an example of what might have happened earlier had Churchill's strategy been realized. There were other difficulties.

The problem of combining the armies of four different nations, with different

\(^3\) Petrie C., The Roumanian Campaign, p. 341.
\(^4\) Kiritescu, p. 265.
\(^5\) Biranek Jan, Bulgaria's Forces, Purnell History of the First World War, p. 1079.
\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Cunningham, The Greek Army and the Dardanelles, p. 122.
languages and with very little equipment in common, is not discussed by Churchill. Yet clearly this would have been one of the major difficulties facing a joint operation in the Balkans. The fact that Bulgarian troops would, in all probability, have found it necessary to traverse Serbia in the course of the operations would not have made co-operation any easier. The poor communications, which were a feature of the area, is another complication not mentioned by Churchill. There was virtually only one major railway, the Sofia-Nish-Budapest line, although Roumania had lines linking Bucharest with the Hungarian capital. The Salonica-Nish line was narrow gauge and had limited carrying capacity. As armies were supplied largely by rail in 1914, these limitations were obviously of crucial importance and it is certain that the Balkan systems would have been unable to support the 1,100,000 troops suggested by Churchill. Indeed we have already seen that the British Military attache considered that not even 500,000 troops could be supported in the Danube valley. Furthermore, it is obvious from the state of their armies that the Balkan countries would have relied on the allies to supply them with ammunition, replacement artillery and probably medical equipment and stores of all kinds. Apart from the fact that Britain and France did not possess surplus material of this kind, the only major ports available for transhipment, Salonica, Constantinopole (had the Turks been defeated) and Venice were many hundreds of miles from the main front and of limited capacity. Finally, in the unlikely event of the German and Austrian defenders, being pushed back by the Balkan armies, they would have been constantly moving away from their main supply bases and their lines of communication would have become greatly extended. When it is remembered that the relatively sophisticated German army was not able to sustain an advance over comparable distances, with the excellent German and Belgium rail systems at its back, this is a factor of no small importance. The Germans and Austrians on the other hand would have been falling back on
a much more developed rail network and their lines of communication would have became shorter. In these circumstances an advance by the Balkan armies might have been short lived.

Thus on any objective assessment, it seems likely that the accession of the Balkan states to the allied side, would have had very little effect on the outcome of the war. No doubt it would have proved embarrassing to the Central Powers and forced them to open another front. But then by 1915 they already had a front of sorts in the Balkans and were able to overrun Roumania without any substantial diminution of forces from the West. It is hard to avoid Norman Stone's conclusion that belief in the efficacy of the intervention of small states was "The diplomatic equivalent of cavalry"\(^1\) and it is ironic that such a belief should be put forward by Churchill.

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME THREE OF THE WORLD CRISIS

Our attention now turns to Churchill's third volume which deals with events from 1916 to 1918. Churchill thought well of this volume. He told his literary agent, "I saw Geoffrey Dawson who, after reading the first eleven chapters in sequence, says that they were superior in interest and importance to either of the previous volumes. Personally I am sure of it."\(^1\) It is certainly true that this volume does contain many powerfully written chapters. (Examples are those on Jutland, the Somme and casualty statistics). Such chapters hold great interest and will be dealt with in some detail. Other sections of the volume are, however, a rather inconsequential melange and it is proposed to deal with them in summary fashion here.

The first example comes in the opening chapter of volume three entitled "The High Command" where Churchill treats briefly a number of minor themes. He surveys in a few pages the history of French strategy from 1911 to the Marne, gives a brief summary of the Joffre-Gallieni controversy and in several more pages takes the story through until the dismissal of Joffre in December 1915. Most of this material lies uneasily at the beginning of a volume which deals with the war from 1916 to 1918. Indeed, much of it is unnecessary as it duplicates material on these issues contained in volume 1.\(^2\) Also more detail about the fall of Joffre is given later in the book in a chapter on the Nivelle offensive. Thus, this section is largely repetitive and judicious editing would have removed it altogether. In fact, the remainder of "The High Command" merely repeats the criticisms of Kitchener made by Churchill in volume 2, and the section on Haig could have been easily placed later in the book. In short, little would have been lost if the chapter had been deleted.

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(1) Churchill to Curtis-Brown 7/10/26, Churchill Papers, 8/207.
(2) See The World Crisis, p. 280-97.
(3) On p. 910-II of volume three most of the first paragraph and all of the third were taken from p. 218-9 of volume 1. However, in volume 1 Churchill wrote, "The Germans, as General Michel and Sir Henry Wilson had predicted three years before, made their vast turning movement through Belgium" (p. 218). On p. 910 Wilson's name does not appear. Perhaps Churchill realized that Wilson's prediction had been that the Germans would not come north of the Meuse.
The same point could be made of a later chapter in volume three, "The Intervention of The United States". The opening pages of this chapter are in fact concerned with the German decision to launch the unrestricted U-boat campaign and could easily have been included in Churchill's chapter on that subject later in the book. Following this is a two-page narrative of events which led to the overthrow of the Czar and the withdrawal of Russia from the war. The only point worth noting here is the remarkably flattering portrait given by Churchill of Nicholas II. He is described in *The World Crisis* as "a true, simple man of average ability, of merciful disposition, upheld in all his daily life by his faith in God." This caricature of the Czar incurred the wrath of Garvin, the editor of *The Observer*, who read the draft of this chapter. Garvin commented, "About Tsarist Russia we are poles asunder ....in spite of all that has been published you don't recognise the corruption, inefficiency, soul-chilling, nation-murdering effect of Tsarism in the Rasputin phase." But Churchill, who in 1926 was passing through his most anti-Bolshevik period, let the section stand.

The remainder of the chapter does deal with "The Intervention of The United States". The line taken by Churchill in this section is decidedly unfriendly to Woodrow Wilson. Churchill considers that the United States should have entered the war much earlier and concludes that Wilson must take responsibility for the fact that they did not do so. He is also anxious that the American contribution to the war effort should be placed in proper perspective and that it be realized that their contribution was largely moral rather than material. As he told Garvin, "I have tried very hard to write appreciatively and at the same time truthfully about The United States participation, and I am glad you do not find it necessary to suggest further emphasis ....She did not bleed and suffer".

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2. Garvin to Churchill (early November 1926), Churchill Papers, 8/204.
The one major chapter in volume three with which it is not intended to deal is that on Verdun. In the light of Alistair Horne's statement that "it would be hard to write anything about Verdun without repeated references to Churchill's 'The World Crisis' ",¹ this may seem a surprising omission. However, Horne has largely ignored his own dictum and proved that it is indeed possible to write about Verdun while substantially ignoring The World Crisis. His "repeated references" amount to no more than half a dozen scattered quotations. This is not to say that there is anything particularly wrong with Churchill's account. In fact, it seems to be quite sound. However, it is apparently based largely on French secondary sources, is necessarily very brief and does not raise any points of a particularly controversial nature. In short, there seems no reason to subject it to an extensive analysis.

It is also not intended to comment extensively on "The Roumanian Disaster". The main point that Churchill makes in this chapter is that the fate of Roumania in 1916 was a direct consequence of remaining neutral in 1915.² In the first two volumes of The World Crisis also Churchill continually expresses amazement that such countries as Roumania could remain neutral. He also claims that the intervention of the Balkan States could have proved decisive on the course of the war. However, in volume three a picture of Roumania emerges which suggests that such views were ill considered. In the course of his narrative on the 1916 Roumanian campaign, Churchill makes it clear that Roumania never really had a chance against a major opponent. He points to the "perilous position" of the country, surrounded on three sides by the enemy, and to the ill-equipped Roumanian Army with only 10 well trained divisions and short of ammunition and modern equipment.³

The point that Churchill fails to realize is that these conditions applied

¹ Horne, Price of Glory, p. 359.
² The World Crisis, p. 1066-7.
³ Ibid. p. 1070-1.
equally to 1915 when Roumania was just as isolated and her army just as poorly equipped. In fact, Churchill's sections on Roumania in 1916 clearly explain why that country elected to remain neutral in 1915. But this conclusion is not drawn in The World Crisis.

Included in another chapter of volume three are a few pages on the pre-war politics of Roumania. The only point of interest here is that once more Churchill obtained most of his material from Headlam-Morley. Large sections of a document written by Headlam-Morley and called "Roumania" were incorporated into the text almost verbatim by Churchill.¹

The section of volume three not discussed so far consists of Churchill's account of the major battles on the Western Front in 1917 and 1918. At first glance these chapters would seem to fall into the same category as those on the Somme and Jutland, and therefore require detailed criticism. They certainly cannot be ignored on the grounds that Churchill did not have access to the primary sources. As will be shown, this was not the case. Also, the chapters make up the bulk of the second part of volume three. However, when the chapters on the 1918 battles are examined in detail, over 40% of their content consists of quotations from memoranda and letters written by Churchill and the reproduction of maps and diagrams. Furthermore, many of the Churchill documents now seem of marginal interest. No less than six long memoranda advocate a policy of building up the allied armies in 1918 for a victory in 1919.² The only real interest in these documents is that

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¹ Headlam-Morley's paper is in Churchill Papers 8/155. Two examples of material used verbatim by Churchill are; from the sentence beginning "The Roumanian Conservatives" and ending "Carpe" on p. 947, and the entire paragraph beginning "A minor complication" on p. 948. See Churchill Papers, 8/185. On this page Churchill has a story about the Queen of Roumania writing poetry under the name of "Carmen Sylva". Her verse, Churchill states, was "widely acclaimed". Churchill obtained this information from Headlam-Morley who confessed that he had not actually read any of it. Headlam-Morley to Churchill 22/2/24, Churchill Papers, 8/185.

² Or 1920. In a paper written in September 1918 Churchill put forward the alternative policies of concentrating resources for victory in 1919 or slowly building up in 1919 for victory in 1920. In the original he did not attempt to pronounce between the two policies but in The World Crisis the document is quoted in an abbreviated form designed to show that Churchill had excluded 1920 as an option. See The World Crisis, p. 1345-7 and the original in C.V.4, p. 383-6.
several of them suggest that in the final year of the war Churchill had become a Westerner. Thus, on October 21st 1917 he writes, "It is obvious that the defeat and breaking-up of the German armies in the West afford the best, the simplest and the swiftest method of arriving at decisive victory". And later, "There is a short way of ending this war: it is to defeat the German armies in the West", which was only what Haig and Robertson had been saying since 1915.

Thus, when Churchill's own documents are deducted from the total number of pages devoted to the 1918 battles we find that only 69 pages remain. Within this brief compass at least six major battles are dealt with, making the discussion of any particular battle very brief. Many of Churchill's battle pieces are in fact merely chronicles with little attempt made to analyse or critically appraise the events discussed. Therefore a detailed investigation of these chapters would appear unwarranted. However, the Churchill Papers contain a mass of interesting material on how these chapters were written, the advisers consulted by Churchill, the changes made as a result of their advice and the sources which were made available to him. It is, therefore, proposed to deal with the historiographical aspect of Churchill's descriptions of the 1917-18 battles.

(1) The World Crisis, p. 1149.
(2) Ibid. p. 1241.
The long period of inactivity at sea came to an end on the 31st May 1916 when the British and German fleets ran into each other to the north-east of Jutland. The German Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Scheer, had planned a combined fleet and submarine operation in an attempt to lure the British through a net of submarines placed off their east coast bases. However, the increased submarine activity had been noticed by British intelligence and the correct conclusion drawn that it was the preliminary to a major fleet movement.

Consequently on May 30th the Grand Fleet was ordered to a rendezvous point in the North Sea. Jellicoe had placed Beatty with the Battle Cruiser Fleet, the Fifth Battle Squadron and attendant light cruisers and destroyers well to the south of the major divisions of the Grand Fleet. If the enemy had not been located by 2.00 p.m. on May 31st, Beatty was to turn north and effect a junction with the main force. The distance between the two fleets at the turning point was to be 70 miles. In view of the later difficulties in establishing communication between the two forces, this distance has been criticized as excessive. However, earlier in the war, when fleet dispositions had been made by the Admiralty, this margin was by no means uncommon. On one occasion the distance set had been 110 miles. Furthermore, there were good tactical reasons why Jellicoe should thus place the two fleets. Beatty had to be far enough south to intercept any raiding force sent against the north coast. (In fact, a raid against the English coast had been the original German plan). The main fleet had to be far enough north to prevent the High Sea Fleet from slipping through to attack the Tenth Cruiser Squadron, which was maintaining the blockade line far to the north. The argument in

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(1) Admiralty to Jellicoe 30/5/16, quoted in Official Despatches Relating to The Battle of Jutland 30th May to 1st June 1916 with Appendices and Charts (hereafter Official Despatches) London, HMSO,1920 [CMND 1068], p. 398

any case is largely academic. If the two forces had been in any other position, the battle would probably not have taken place.

Just after midnight Jellicoe received a message from the Admiralty telling him that Scheer's flagship was still in harbour. It was thought that bad weather had prevented German air reconnaissance, which in turn had delayed the whole movement. This message was not correct. Had the Director of operations (Admiral Thomas Jackson), who sent the message, bothered to check with the Intelligence Division, he would have discovered that Scheer invariably transferred his call sign to a shore station on leaving harbour and substituted another sign for it. This inefficiency at the Admiralty removed any sense of urgency from the British sweep. Jellicoe reduced the speed of the Grand Fleet, took time to examine suspicious merchant ships, and as a consequence arrived late at the rendezvous point. This was to cost the British an hour of daylight fighting.

For Beatty, the Admiralty message was the only notable occurrence in an uneventful night. By 10.00 a.m. on May 31st he was approaching the point where he would turn north to meet the Grand Fleet. His cruiser screen (1st, 2nd and 3rd Light Cruiser Squadrons) was in advance of the battle cruisers and placed to observe an enemy approaching from the south east (the approximate direction of Heligoland). The battle cruisers were in two divisions (1st Battle Cruiser Squadron, Lion, (flag) Princess Royal, Queen Mary, Tiger; 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadron, New Zealand, Indefatigable), and close enough so that they could be concentrated into one squadron quickly. The powerful 5th Battle Squadron, commanded by Rear Admiral Evan-Thomas, was five miles north west of the Lion.

(1) In Jellicoe Papers, Add/Mss 49014.
(4) Ibid. p. 17
(5) Ibid.
Beatty's disposition of the 5th B.S. has come in for much criticism. It has been pointed out that the position of the cruiser screen indicated an expected enemy attack from the south east but the most powerful force at Beatty's disposal was to the north west.\(^1\) It is also stated that Beatty neglected a fundamental principle of war by approaching battle with his major force dispersed. In Beatty's defence it can be said that he had placed Evan-Thomas in this position to assist him in taking up his position in the van of the Grand Fleet when the two forces joined.\(^2\) Also, the two forces were only five miles apart and could have been concentrated in about 10 minutes. Thus, Beatty could easily have fallen back on the 5th B.S. on the approach of the German Fleet. Finally, the faulty Admiralty signal had led Beatty to believe that there was little chance of a major fleet action being fought that day. In short, Beatty's initial dispositions seem quite sensible.

At 1.58 p.m., according to plan, Beatty turned his whole force to the north to meet the Grand Fleet\(^3\) but at 2.10 the Galatea (Alexander-Sinclair), flag ship of the 1st Light Cruiser Squadron (L.C.S.), reported that a two-funnelled ship had stopped a steamer to the east and that the Galatea and Phaeton were closing to investigate.\(^4\) At 2.20 Galatea reported to Beatty that the steamer (a neutral Danish vessel) had been stopped by "two cruisers, probably hostile".\(^5\) At 2.32 Beatty responded to the Galatea's reports. He made a general signal by flags altering the course of the battle cruisers to the south south east towards the enemy ships.\(^6\) This signal was not taken in by the 5th B.S. The smoke made by the battle cruisers in raising steam obscured the Lion's signal flags from Evan-Thomas. However, at 2.30 the Barham had picked up a searchlight signal from Beatty,
ordering his light forces to form a submarine screen when he altered course to SSE.\(^1\) Either this signal was not passed on to Evan-Thomas\(^2\) or he ignored it, reasoning that it was meant only for Beatty's light forces. Evan-Thomas did not receive Beatty's 2.32 signal from the usual source, the Tiger, rear ship of the 1st Battle Cruiser Squadron, whose duty it was to pass on Beatty's signals to the 5th B.S.\(^3\) Five minutes later the Tiger rectified this mistake. Thus, at 2.37 Evan-Thomas finally got Beatty's signal and at 2.40 he turned.\(^4\) By this time the gap between the two forces had widened from 4 ½ - 5 miles to almost 10. Critics of Evan-Thomas have contended that rather than await instructions, it was his duty to follow Beatty immediately he saw the battle cruisers sheer off to the South East. This assumes that Evan-Thomas did see Beatty's manoeuvre. It is possible that the attention of the lookouts on the flagship was directed towards the north, the direction from which the Grand Fleet was approaching. However, after the war Evan-Thomas claimed that he did see Beatty turn.\(^5\) He gave then two reasons for not immediately following the battle cruisers. First, that at that point only German light forces were known to be in the area and there was no reason to concentrate\(^6\) and, second, that Beatty wished the 5th B.S. further to the north to prevent the enemy escaping in that direction.\(^7\) Of course, as Jellicoe pointed out, if Beatty had made his original signal by W/T instead of flags, the whole incident would not have occurred.\(^8\)

The first indication that more than "two hostile cruisers" (in fact, one cruiser and two destroyers) were in the area came at 2.39. Galatea reported to Beatty, "Have sighted large amount of smoke as though from a

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\(^{(1)}\) Beatty to Churchill 4/3/27, Churchill Papers 8/212.  
\(^{(2)}\) This is Evan-Thomas' contention - Note in Evan-Thomas paper, British Library, London, Add/Mss 52506.  
\(^{(3)}\) Chalmers, Beatty, p. 225.  
\(^{(5)}\) Evan-Thomas to Admiralty 14/8/23, Evan-Thomas Papers, Add/Mss 52504.  
\(^{(6)}\) Evan-Thomas to Admiralty 18/9/23, in Ibid.  
\(^{(7)}\) Note by Evan-Thomas Aug. 1923, in Ibid.  
\(^{(8)}\) Jellicoe to Evan-Thomas 3/6/23, in Ibid.
This was confirmed 12 minutes later when Galatea identified smoke from 7 vessels besides destroyers and cruisers. Beatty was now aware that German heavy forces were probably in the area. The distance between the 5th B.S. and the battle cruisers was still 10 miles but the enemy was distant and there was still ample time to concentrate the two forces. By steaming towards Evan-Thomas, Beatty could have closed the gap in under 15 minutes. He chose not to do so. Probably his major concern was to identify the exact nature of the enemy force as quickly as possible and to place his battle cruisers across its line of retreat.

Furthermore, Beatty may have reasoned that his six battle cruisers were a superior force to any likely German scouting force (the Germans had only 5 battle cruisers in 1916) and as the Admiralty had informed him that Scheer was still in harbour, there was no need to concentrate further. However, it should still be noted that Beatty made his decision before the exact composition of the German force was known. In his Official Despatch, Jellicoe approved Beatty's action, but after the war he argued that Beatty knew the enemy was coming north from an earlier report of the Galatea, and that Beatty could therefore have turned north, closed the 5th B.S., and still have been in a position to cut the German force off from its base.

This was indeed the case, but perhaps visions of the escaping German battle cruisers at the Dogger Bank convinced Beatty to act as he did.

The next positive sighting of the enemy came at 3.24 from the Nottingham (2nd L.C.S.). Five columns of smoke were reported bearing E.N.E. One minute later Beatty discovered that he was in the presence of Hipper's battle cruisers. The British scouting forces had failed utterly to give Beatty advance warning of Hipper's approach. When the Galatea, on the left wing of the cruiser screen, made the initial sighting, the 3rd L.C.S. moved north to support it, leaving a gap directly in front

(1) Official Despatches, p. 444
(2) Ibid. p. 445.
(4) Jellicoe, Errors Made in the Jutland Battle, Jellicoe Papers, Add/Mss 49014.
(5) Official Despatches, p. 447.
(6) Ibid.
of the battle cruisers. On the right wing, the 2nd L.C.S., the only scouting force at Jutland that fulfilled its proper function, was well to the south and only sighted Hipper at the same time as Beatty.

Hipper's five battle cruisers were scouting for the High Sea Fleet, then well to the south east. Because of slightly more favourable light, Hipper had sighted Beatty at 3.20. Grasping immediately that there was a chance of destroying a section of the Grand Fleet, Hipper turned 16 points to starboard and headed towards Scheer. While the German battle cruisers were turning, Beatty ordered steam for 24 knots and altered course to the east, directly for Hipper. The opposing forces now rapidly closed and by 3.48 they were on roughly parallel courses to the south. Where was the 5th B.S.? It was still well to the north west. At 3.15 Evan-Thomas had made up much of the ten mile gap between his force and Beatty but at 3.21 he turned and followed a course parallel to Beatty but to the north west. Why he did this has not been explained. Perhaps he thought that Beatty would want him to maintain his original position 5 miles to the north west of the battle cruisers. In any case, Beatty must have seen the manoeuvre and did nothing to alter it. In fact, apart from a signal at 3.35, ordering the 5th B.S. to maintain a parallel course with the battle cruisers, Beatty did not communicate with Evan-Thomas again until the end of the run south. The impression given is that Beatty had almost forgotten that the 5th B.S. was present and this could have been the case. The two forces were not used to working together. The 5th B.S. had only been stationed at Rosyth temporarily and Beatty and Evan-Thomas had never discussed combined tactics. When Evan-Thomas did close with the battle cruisers it was on his own initiative but too late to affect the initial encounter.

The battle cruiser action began badly for the British. The rangefinders on the leading ships greatly overestimated the range and the first

(1) Beatty knew of this gap but made no attempt to move the 3rd L.C.S. to its original position.
(4) Official Despatches, p. 449.
British salvos fell well over. By contrast, the German shooting was good and the Lion received hits from the outset. The accuracy of the German fire was aided by the fact that for a crucial ten minutes the British did not fire at one of the German battle cruisers (Derfflinger). The Queen Mary had missed the fire distribution signal (again made by flags) and had taken on her opposite number instead of firing at the second ship in the German line. Then at 4.02 the Indefatigable was hit by a succession of shells. This was followed by an explosion and at 4.05 the ship turned over and sank. There were few survivors. Twenty minutes later the Queen Mary suffered the same fate. Beatty had now lost a third of his force in half an hour. Excellent shooting by the Germans had inflicted 44 hits on the British ships (ten on the Lion) while the British had only scored 17 hits. Moreover, 6 of these hits had been scored by the 5th B.S. coming into action at extreme range during the latter part of the run south. There were some extenuating circumstances for the poor shooting of the British. The light was against them. While British ships were silhouetted against the Western sky, the Germans "showed up indifferently against a mass of low lying dark grey and purplish clouds." Visibility was further obscured by smoke from the British ships which drifted across the range. There were other factors. The higher speed of the British ships (25 knots vs. the Germans 18) made them more unstable gun platforms and the superior German rangefinders enabled Hipper to hit with his early salvos.

At 4.38 a startling report from the Southampton changed the entire nature of the battle. "Urgent. Priority. Have sighted Enemy battle-fleet bearing approximately S.E. Course of enemy N." Beatty now realized that

(2) List compiled by A. Campbell, 1972, Beatty Papers. Bennett calculates 32 hits by British, 14 by Germans, Marder 28 and 15.
(3) Campbell List, Beatty Papers.
(4) King-Hall, Louise (Ed), Sea Saga: Being the Naval Diaries of Four Generations of the King-Hall Family, London, Gollancz, 1935, p. 455. (Stephen King-Hall was an officer on the Southampton).
(5) Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p. 70. However, a rough copy of the New Zealand report in the Beatty papers says smoke interference was slight.
(6) Ibid. p. 71-2.
(7) Official Despatches, p. 452.
Hipper had been trying to lure him on to the High Sea Fleet. He saw at once that he could reverse the situation and at 4.40 he turned 16 points to starboard and headed north towards Jellicoe. Just after the turn the battle cruisers met the 5th B.S. coming south. Evan-Thomas had not taken in the Southampton’s 4.38 signal and was unaware of the presence of the High Sea Fleet. He had also not seen Beatty’s 4.40 signal to turn north which once again had been made by flags. As the two squadrons passed, Beatty signalled to the 5th B.S., "Alter course in succession 16 points to starboard", but he did not haul down the signal (that is, make it executive) until 4.57. Evan-Thomas therefore continued to travel south, directly for the High Sea Fleet, for another ten minutes. This delay in hauling down the Lion’s signal amounted almost to criminal negligence on the part of the Lion’s signal officer, the unfortunate Seymour, but there were other objectionable features to the signal. The order given was to turn in succession, that is, each ship reached the turning point and turned individually. This prolonged the time necessary to turn and brought Evan-Thomas dangerously close to the High Sea Fleet as well as giving Scheer a well defined target (the squadron’s turning point) at which to aim. A better manoeuvre would have been a turn together which would have extricated Evan-Thomas more quickly although it would have placed the flagship at the rear of the squadron during the run north. Another objectionable feature of the signal was that it specified a turn to starboard. A turn to port was probably the correct direction because this would have brought the 5th B.S. into closer touch with Beatty. Of course Evan-Thomas could have disobeyed the signal and turned his ships together but, as Marder says, "flag officers, like Evan-Thomas, with a long background of manoeuvring fleets by precise signals, did not do such things in those days."
In the event, the British got away with this muddle. The 5th B.S. was hit about 13 times during the turn but no hit was vital and the ships were able to follow Beatty to the north in full fighting order.  

It was of paramount importance during the run north that Beatty keep Jellicoe informed of the position and formation of the German fleet. Jellicoe needed this information to enable him to deploy the battle fleet at the earliest possible moment. However, up until this point Beatty's reports to Jellicoe had not been impressive. He had told Jellicoe of the presence of Hipper's battle cruisers and at 3.55 signalled that he was about to engage the enemy. This was the last message received by Jellicoe until Southampton's 4.38 signal that the enemy's battle fleet was in sight. No one thought to advise Jellicoe of the loss of the Indefatigable and the Queen Mary. Beatty's long silence was broken at 4.45 when he signalled Jellicoe, "Have sighted Enemy's battlefleet bearing S.E." This was mangled in transmission and was read by Jellicoe as "26-30 Battleships probably hostile [!!] ...steering S.E." This jumble was corrected by a model report from Goodenough a few minutes later which gave Scheer's course and the composition of the leading German squadrons, but a further report from Goodenough at 5.00 gave the position of the German battlefleet 7½ miles to the east of its true position. This was to have unfortunate consequences later. No more reports were received by Jellicoe until 5.40.

(1) Campbell List, Beatty Papers.
(2) The Grand Fleet Battle Orders stated that "The primary function of battle-cruisers is the destruction of the battle cruisers of the enemy". No mention is made of the duty to supply the Commander-in-Chief with information. (Adm. 116/1343). However, Beatty had written before the War, "[The battle cruisers should] also be invaluable to the Chief as a means of discovering rapidly the whereabouts of an Enemy Fleet". Functions of a Battle Cruiser Squadron, 1913, Beatty Papers.
(3) Official Despatches, p.449
(4) Ibid. p.450.
(5) Ibid. p.452.
(6) Ibid. p.453.
(7) Ibid.
(8) Ibid.
(9) Frost H.H., The Battle of Jutland, p.265. Little blame can be attached to commanders who made mistakes in estimating the position of the enemy. They had been out of sight of land for some time and heavily engaged in battle. It is possible that the firing of the guns upset the ships' compasses. Errors were inevitable in such circumstances.
One reason for this second period of silence was that Beatty was out of range of the enemy's battle cruisers and for half an hour had no enemy ships in sight.1 Goodenough was in sight of the German battle fleet at some time during this period, but strangely did not report.2 Less excusable was the lack of information from the 5th B.S. The Malaya's post-battle report states that the ship was under constant fire from four ships of the High Sea Fleet between 5.12 and 5.30.3 The Valiant was in sight of Scheer for most of the time between 5.17 and 5.56.4 Possibly the captains of these ships believed that the flag ship would inform Jellicoe of the situation, but the Barham's radio had been shot away. The other light cruiser squadrons failed to act as scouts for the battle cruisers and keep in touch with the enemy. It might be thought that this was their essential function but in fact the Grand Fleet Battle Orders make no mention of a reconnaissance role for light cruisers once the action had commenced.5

Despite these lapses, the run to the north favoured the British. Although Beatty's ships were only in action briefly, they managed to inflict 21 hits on the German ships while suffering only 18.6 Several of the German battle cruisers were little better than wrecks and two had only one gun turret in action.7 However, Jellicoe was still largely in the dark. He knew that Beatty was leading the High Sea Fleet towards him but he had no accurate information about the position of either the Lion or Hipper and Scheer, and at 5.40 it had been forty minutes since he had last received a signal from a British ship.

On learning that Beatty was engaging the enemy, Jellicoe had increased the speed of the dreadnought fleet, which was coming south in six parallel columns of four ships, to 20 knots, its maximum cruising speed.8

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(1) Lion's Report, Adm. 137/302.
(4) Valiant's Report 2/6/16, in Ibid.
(5) Grand Fleet Battle Orders, Adm. 116/1343. The duties of light cruisers are listed as - attack on the enemy light cruisers and destroyers, supporting destroyers, attack on enemy battleships with torpedoes.
(6) Campbell List, Beatty Papers.
At the same time he sent Hood with the 3rd B.C.S. south to assist Beatty. Jellicoe also attempted to push forward his cruiser screen but the old ships of the 1st and 2nd Cruiser Squadrons were scarcely faster than the dreadnoughts and they were unable to increase their distance from the battlefleet appreciably. Jellicoe could have used the much faster 4th L.C.S. as an advanced scouting force but he chose not to do so. Perhaps he considered that Hood's squadron would provide him with the information he required; or he may have been reluctant to send lightly armoured ships into the unknown. Even if Jellicoe had ordered this move, they probably would have gone in the same direction as Hood; that is, too far east to provide accurate reports. It must be remembered Jellicoe did not know the position of the German fleet at this point.

At 5.40 the second period of silence was broken. Goodenough telegraphed to Jellicoe that the enemy's battlefleet had altered course to the N.N.W. The two fleets were obviously only a few miles apart and it was imperative that Jellicoe deploy the Grand Fleet into fighting order but still no accurate or specific information had arrived from the battle cruisers. Indeed, during the next 20 minutes there was a spate of conflicting and contradictory reports which, if anything, made Jellicoe's decision harder. At 5.42 the Black Prince, on the extreme right of the Grand Fleet cruiser screen, established visual contact with Beatty's force. However, she reported to Jellicoe that enemy battle cruisers were in action bearing south five miles. Jellicoe realized that these ships were probably Beatty's and this was confirmed at 5.48 by a report from the flag ship of the 1st C.S. (Defence). Hood's squadron did nothing to clarify this obscure position. Because of errors in computing Beatty's position, Hood was far to the east of the converging fleets. If one of his supporting

(2) Godfrey, Captain J.H., Seven Lectures on Jutland (No.3), Cab. 45/269 Pt.II.
(3) Official Despatches, p.456.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid.
cruisers had not sighted the German 2nd Scouting Group, then to the north of Hipper, Hood might have missed the battle altogether. As it was, Hood was in action with German light forces and battle-cruisers from 5.34 but never informed Jellicoe of this vital fact.1

At 5.55 the position of the German fleet was no clearer to Jellicoe. Almost in desperation he signalled to Marlborough, leading ship of the starboard column, "What can you see?" 2 Back came the startling reply, "Our battle cruisers bearing S.S.W., steering east, Lion leading ship".3 From earlier positional reports, Jellicoe had expected Beatty to be 12 miles distant and directly ahead of him at 6.00. Instead, Beatty had appeared on the starboard bow only 5½ miles away. Thus Jellicoe had considerably less time than he had initially thought in which to deploy the battlefleet and no idea of the position of the German fleet in relation to Beatty. Then, at 6.01 Jellicoe sighted the Lion. He signalled to Beatty, "Where is Enemy's B.F.?" 4 Beatty had been out of touch with Scheer for some time and could only reply, "Enemy battle cruisers bearing S.E."5 An exasperated Jellicoe repeated the message at 6.10 and at last got the information he sought. "Have sighted Enemy's battle fleet bearing S.S.W."6

When Scheer was finally located he was to the south of the Grand Fleet and on its starboard bow. Ahead of him were Hipper's battle cruisers which were being forced to the east by a large turning movement by Beatty. This movement had the disadvantage of taking Beatty across the front of the Grand Fleet but it also hid Jellicoe's force from Scheer until the last moment. Scheer's force consisted of 16 dreadnoughts deployed in a single line, followed by 6 ageing pre-dreadnoughts of the 2nd Squadron.7 Against this force Jellicoe had the 24 dreadnoughts of the Grand Fleet, plus 4

(1) Official Despatches, p.455.
(2) Ibid. p.457.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Ibid.
dreadnoughts from the 5th B.S. which was in the process of joining the main fleet. However, Jellicoe was unaware that his superiority was so great. The garbled message from Beatty at 4.45 indicated that the entire High Sea Fleet of 18 dreadnoughts and 10 pre-dreadnoughts was out. This impression was to remain with Jellicoe throughout the battle for he never saw more than three or four German ships at a time.

When Beatty's 6.10 message was deciphered on the Iron Duke, Jellicoe had only a few seconds to make a decision on how to deploy the Grand Fleet, which, it will be remembered, was travelling south in six parallel columns of four ships. Jellicoe chose to deploy on the port column, a decision for which he has been criticized ever since. What were his reasons? Jellicoe considered that a port deployment would squarely cross the enemy's T, thus bringing the maximum number of British guns to bear on the head of the German line. Also, an easterly position, which would result from a deployment to port, would give the British the light advantage they had so far lacked during the battle as well as placing the Grand Fleet directly between Scheer and his base. Most of Jellicoe's critics reject these arguments. They claim that a starboard deployment would have brought the Grand Fleet into action 10 minutes earlier at a point in the late afternoon when every minute was valuable. A starboard deployment would also have brought the British battle line much closer to the German fleet, thus making full use of the British superiority in gunfire and also making it more difficult for Scheer to escape by turning away. These are important points but there were serious reasons for not deploying to starboard. For example, it is certain that the starboard column (led by Marlborough) would have masked the fire of many other British ships at the crucial moment of deployment. If this situation had developed the Germans would have been able to bring a concentrated fire to bear on the head of the British line as it turned. As it was, several ships at this end of the line were straddled by German fire during the port deployment although their

(1) Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p.82-3.
position was some thousands of yards further away from their corresponding position had the fleet been deployed to starboard. Furthermore, Jellicoe considered that a starboard deployment would expose the head of the British line to a series of attacks by German torpedo boat flotillas which he expected to be located in front of the German battle line. In fact, these flotillas were well to the east of the German battle fleet, but Jellicoe was not to know this as deployment had taken place before any German ships had been sighted from the Iron Duke.

Theoretically, there was a third alternative open to Jellicoe. He could have deployed on the centre column and led the van himself. This would have had the advantage of bringing the Grand Fleet much closer to the German line (Marder claims 4,000 yards closer) while still placing it in a position to cut Scheer off from his base. The light advantage would also have been secured. In short, this manoeuvre seems to have the advantages of the port deployment without its disadvantages. No doubt this is why the centre column manoeuvre proved so appealing to many naval historians (including, as we shall see, Churchill). In fact, it was never a possibility. The manoeuvre was extremely complicated. While Jellicoe steamed ahead in the Iron Duke, followed by the starboard divisions in order, it would have been necessary for the two port divisions to circle 360 degrees to the right and come in on the end of the line. A considerable amount of intricate manoeuvring was needed to complete this deployment and the danger was that this would lead to confusion just when the British line was coming into battle. After the war Jellicoe stated that at the head of the line (it was over 5 miles long) he would have lost control of the movements of the rear squadrons and perhaps of the whole battle.

As it was, the deployment was far from perfect. Beatty had to steam across the front of the battle line to reach his position in the van and in so

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(3) Jellicoe to Beatty 4/6/16, Beatty Papers.
doing masked the German Fleet from some of the British ships. The British van (led by Admiral Jerram in King George V) had to slow to 14 knots to allow Beatty to get ahead and this caused some bunching and confusion at the rear of the line. While Beatty was crossing in front of the battle line, still heavily engaged with Hipper's battle cruisers, he had to take sharp evasive action to avoid two ships of the 1st C.S., Defence and Warrior, charging towards the German line. In seconds the Defence had blown up and the Warrior was a crippled wreck. The fiery commander of the squadron (Sir Robert Arbuthnot) was apparently trying to fulfil his task as a reconnaissance force for the Grand Fleet and had not realized that the German Fleet was so close. Apart from disrupting Beatty, Arbuthnot's recklessness cost the British over 1,000 casualties and caused a great cloud of black smoke to obscure the German Fleet from the Grand Fleet at the moment of deployment.

Meanwhile, at the van of the British line another disaster occurred. Hood was last noticed coming into action with Hipper's battle cruisers just after 6.20. The shooting of the 3rd B.C.S. was excellent and many hits were scored on the German ships. Then, at 6.30 a salvo from the Derfflinger struck the Invincible, Hood's flagship, and it blew up. There were only 6 survivors.¹ This action did serve one useful purpose. Hood's attack on the already crippled German battle cruisers forced the Germans to launch a series of torpedo boat attacks at his squadron. At this time the Grand Fleet was in the process of deploying and very vulnerable to such attacks.

At the rear of the line the 5th B.S. approached the Grand Fleet just as it began to deploy. Evan-Thomas concluded that Jellicoe had decided to deploy on the starboard column and endeavoured to reach his position at the head of the line. As the deployment proceeded he realized his mistake and, as prescribed by the G.F.B.O., headed for the rear of the line instead.²

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¹ Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p.99
² Waller A.C., Fifth Battle Squadron at Jutland, p.796; Grand Fleet Battle Orders, Adm. 116/1343.
At this point the Warspite’s helm jammed and the ship headed towards the German line in two erratic circular movements. (One of these circles masked the crippled Warrior from Scheer and saved that ship from certain destruction). Warspite’s helm was eventually righted but the ship could take no further part in the battle and the remaining three ships of the squadron had to be content to remain at the western extremity of the British line. In this position the 5th B.S. took little part in the battle fleet action and it has been argued that Jellicoe should have made better use of these powerful ships.

One alternative often put forward is that Evan-Thomas should have been sent to the disengaged side of the German battle fleet where it could have fallen on the weak pre-dreadnought squadron. However, this ignores the fact that Jellicoe did not at this point know the exact position of the German battle line or the position of the pre-dreadnoughts in it or even if the pre-dreadnoughts were at sea. ¹ Neither is it clear how the 5th B.S. could have got to the disengaged side of the enemy from its position at deployment.

A glance at the deployment diagram on p.1015 of The World Crisis shows how difficult this manoeuvre would have been.² The fact that the Barham’s main W/T had been destroyed would not have made the problem of communication any easier.³ Finally, if the manoeuvre had been attempted, it is possible that the 5th B.S. would have been trapped by the High Sea Fleet when Scheer executed his first battle turn at 6.48.

Despite the confusion, deployment was well under way by 6.30. At this point the enemy battle fleet was sighted from the flagship and the Iron Duke opened fire. Now for the first time Scheer realized he was in the presence of the entire British fleet.⁴ However, the first British bombardment lasted only a few minutes and was much hampered by the "variable and deceptive" visibility.⁵ Only three or four German ships were seen from

(1) Jellicoe to Beatty 4/6/16, Beatty Papers.
(2) Jellicoe makes this point - See "The Great Fleet and Jutland", Jellicoe Papers, Add/Mss 49041.
(3) Godfrey, Captain J.H., Seven Lectures on Jutland (No.4), Cab. 45/269 Pt.II.
any one ship. Nevertheless, the shooting of the Grand Fleet was good; twelve hits were scored without the Germans being able to reply.  

Confronted with the British cannonade Scheer executed a 16 point battle-about-turn and disappeared in the mist. This manoeuvre was seen by some ships towards the centre and rear of the British line. None of them reported it to Jellicoe who thought that the enemy had merely been obscured by low cloud and smoke. Jellicoe was aware that the Germans might perform this manoeuvre but he expected it to be accompanied by massed destroyer attacks. When these did not eventuate it confirmed his opinion that Scheer would reappear when the visibility improved. In the meantime, with the exact position of the German fleet uncertain, Jellicoe ordered the fleet to turn in a wide circling movement to the south to ensure that the High Sea Fleet remained cut off from its base. This manoeuvre was not forced on Jellicoe by enemy torpedo attacks, which were completely ineffective, and it was not a turn away from the enemy as some critics have claimed, but a necessary movement designed to maintain a favourable position. Was there an alternative manoeuvre open to Jellicoe? An order to turn and pursue the German fleet could hardly have been given because the exact position of that fleet was not known to him. Furthermore, a "turn and pursue" order could have enabled the enemy torpedo boats to attack the van of the Grand Fleet at short range out of the mist, a far different prospect to face than the easily seen long range attacks which had so far been easily countered. To divide the fleet and pursue was even more dangerous because Jellicoe could not be sure that Scheer's entire force would not emerge out of the mist and fall upon a detached British squadron.

The Grand Fleet, after the circling movement to the south, was not in a continuous line but in echelons by division. Just before 7.00 the High

(1) Some ships in the van apparently did not see the enemy at all. See Scholtz, G.von, With the British Battle Fleet: War Recollections of a Russian Naval Officer, London, Hutchinson, 1925, p.132.
(2) Frost H.H., The Battle of Jutland, p.325.
(3) See for example, "Extract from Officers' Report H.M.S. Benbow 10/6/16", Adm. 137/302.
(5) Official Despatches, p.360.
Sea Fleet reappeared out of the mist heading straight for the centre of the British line. Scheer, who was probably trying to escape to the north of the Grand Fleet, had miscalculated its position and had once again blundered into Jellicoe's trap. The British opened fire immediately, this time with much greater effect. 34 hits were scored on the German fleet.\(^1\) The German position was so desperate that Scheer ordered his battle cruisers to charge the enemy while torpedo attacks were launched by the 6th and 9th flotillas. Luckily for Hipper the battle cruiser "death ride" was called off but the torpedo boat attack achieved its purpose. At 7.21 Jellicoe altered course 2 points away from the enemy and at 7.25 a further 2 points.\(^2\) This allowed Scheer to execute a second battle turn and escape to the west. Should Jellicoe have turned away? It is obvious that some manoeuvre was necessary for 31 torpedoes had been fired at the Grand Fleet.\(^3\) 21 of these passed through the 1st Battle Squadron, which had to manoeuvre violently to avoid being hit.\(^4\) An alternative to turning away from a torpedo attack was to turn towards it. This would have brought Jellicoe closer to Scheer, who was retiring in some confusion, and placed the British in an excellent position to close the rear German squadrons. However, turning towards a torpedo attack had fallen into disfavour before the war. The Grand Fleet had not practised the manoeuvre and considerably more risk was involved than in the turn away.\(^5\) Also, it was expected that the German torpedo boats would attack in waves those squadrons leading the manoeuvre. Critics of Jellicoe agree that turning towards the enemy would have involved more risk, but say that Jellicoe should have accepted the challenge because the chance to catch and annihilate the German fleet was worth some risk. However, it is unlikely that a battle of annihilation would have followed a turn towards

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(1) Campbell List, Beatty Papers.
(2) Official Despatches, p.464.
(5) Frost has calculated that Jellicoe could have expected 6 hits if he had turned towards the enemy attack. See Frost H.H., The Battle of Jutland, p.376.
the enemy. At this time the Grand Fleet was 13-18,000 yards from the German dreadnoughts and 24-26,000 yards from the pre-dreadnoughts. The Konigs at the rear of the German line were 2 or 3 knots faster than the British battle ships and presumably would have gradually drawn away. The next closest, the Kaisers, were of equal speed and presumably would have maintained their position. The remaining German dreadnoughts and the pre-dreadnoughts were several knots slower but by nightfall they would still have been 16,000 yards away from the closest British ship; that is, out of effective range. The British fleet would have continued to gain during the night but no decisive action could have been fought under these conditions.

In any case, even if Jellicoe had turned towards the torpedo attack, it would have been impossible for him to pursue the German fleet because, once again, he had not seen the execution of the battle turn. For the second time Jellicoe thought that the disappearance of the enemy was due to the thickening mist. Yet again his battlefleet captains let him down. Scheer's turn was seen by the Marlborough, Revenge, Agincourt and Valiant but none of them passed this information on to the flag ship.

Jellicoe may be considered partly to blame for these lapses. The duty of informing the C-in-C of the position of the enemy was not stressed in the Grand Fleet Battle Orders. It may be thought that it should have been unnecessary to lay down instructions to experienced officers on this seemingly obvious matter but the point is that, as the G.F.B.O. normally tried to cover everything, it seems likely that captains carried out just the duties laid down and little more.

Even though night was falling, Jellicoe had not given up all hope of further engaging the High Sea Fleet. He knew Scheer was somewhere to the west and at 7.35 he altered course south by west to try to re-establish contact. A few minutes earlier Scheer had turned his fleet to the south so

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that when Jellicoe made a further turn to the west at 8.00, he was steering
directly for the High Sea Fleet. 1 It is in this context that Beatty's
famous signal "Submit van of Battleships follow Battle Cruisers. We can
then cut off whole of enemy's battle-fleet", 2 should be read. It is the
view of some writers that this signal indicated that Beatty was urging a
reluctant Jellicoe to take decisive action before it was too late. This
can hardly be squared with the facts. Although Beatty sent the message
at 7.47, it did not reach the Iron Duke before 7.54. 3 and Jellicoe probably
did not read it until just before 8.14. 4 Soon after he read it, Jellicoe
signalled to Jerram (leading the van squadron) to follow the battle cruisers, 5
but Jerram's battleships in the van could not "follow the battle cruisers"
because Beatty had long been out of sight to the south. Moreover, since
8.00, that is almost certainly before Jellicoe had read Beatty's signal,
the battle fleet had been steering a westerly course which was more likely
to bring them into contact with Scheer than following Beatty on his course
to the S.W. Beatty's message was a proper one to send in the circumstances
as he knew them, but Jellicoe had already taken more appropriate action to
bring about the result which Beatty desired. The image of Jellicoe reluct-
antly following his dashing subordinate must therefore be abandoned.

There was one opportunity for the van of the battle fleet to engage
the enemy before dark. About 8.45 two light cruisers, Caroline and Royalist,
saw the leading German battleships. The leading cruiser signalled to
Jerram, who was nearly in the King George V, for permission to attack.
Jerram had also seen these ships but he refused the cruiser's request and
declined to open fire himself as he was convinced that the ships were Beatty's
battle cruisers. 6 Caroline and Royalist ignored this order and launched three

(1) Official Despatches, p.467.
(2) Ibid. p.466.
(3) Ibid.
torpedoes at the enemy but a complete flotilla attack did not develop because the supporting destroyers decided not to attack in the absence of covering fire from Jerram's squadron.  

At 9.15 Jellicoe disposed the Grand Fleet in its night cruising formation. The battle cruisers were placed ahead of the main fleet and to the east. It would be their task to cut off any German attempt to escape to the south. The dreadnought fleet was disposed in 5 parallel columns and set a course to the S.S.E. All destroyer flotillas were ordered to take station 5 miles astern of the battle fleet. By thus extending his line Jellicoe hoped to present the maximum possible obstacle to the enemy in the event of them attempting a breakthrough to the east. Yet Scheer executed just such a breakthrough. What went wrong on the British side? There were four swept channels through the Heligoland minefields available to Scheer. Jellicoe estimated that Scheer would attempt to return home via the southerly Ems channel. He based his calculation on two reports received from the 2nd L.C.S. at 11.30 and 11.38, indicating that the High Sea Fleet was heading south on a course parallel to the Grand Fleet, taking Scheer directly towards the Ems channel. However, there were many reasons why Scheer might not take this course. The entrance of the Ems channel was 12 hours distant at 9.00 (at 16 knots) but there were only 6 hours of darkness available (sunrise at 3.09). Thus there was a good possibility that if Scheer chose this route he would be brought to action in daylight. Two other routes gave Scheer much more chance of escaping unseen. The North Heligoland route was 6½ hours steaming at 9.00 (at 16 knots) and the Amrum Bank route was only 4½ hours away. On this basis it is hard to see why Jellicoe neglected these more direct northerly routes. Furthermore, Jellicoe

(1) Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p.127-8  
(2) Official Despatches, p.472.  
(3) Ibid. p.476.  
(5) Ibid.
had received information from the Admiralty at 11.30 indicating that Scheer had chosen the Amrum Bank route, but he disregarded it because of the visual sightings from Goodenough and because previous Admiralty intelligence had been proved faulty. 1 Indeed, the Admiralty must take a large part of the blame for Scheer's escape. The signal received by Jellicoe at 11.30 was an amalgam of three signals. One of these signals was a call from Scheer for airship reconnaissance off Horns Reef (just to the north of the Amrum Bank channel) for the morning of June 1st. 2 If this signal alone had reached Jellicoe intact, he should have been in no doubt as to Scheer's intentions. Moreover, seven more signals from Scheer were intercepted by the Admiralty during the night, each one indicating that the High Sea Fleet was heading for Amrum Bank. 3 Not one was passed on to Jellicoe.

At 11.00 the High Sea Fleet passed to the north of the Grand Fleet and ran into Jellicoe's cruisers and destroyers. In all there were six encounters between the British light forces and the German dreadnoughts. Hopelessly outgunned and with no training for night fighting, the destroyer flotillas were unable to bar the passage of the High Sea Fleet. The Grand Fleet did intervene because during the first five encounters none of the British ships reported the presence of heavy German units to Jellicoe. Only the captain of the 12th Flotilla thought it important to inform Jellicoe of the position of Scheer. Early on the morning of June 1st he sent a series of messages to the Commander-in-Chief, indicating Scheer's course and position. 4 None of these messages reached Jellicoe, probably because of German jamming. In any case it was then too late for the British to have reached Horns Reef ahead of the High Sea Fleet, although any German stragglers could almost certainly have been destroyed. The silence of the Grand Fleet destroyers is difficult to explain. In their defence it can be said that they were heavily engaged against impossible odds and that they were used to working in conjunction

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1 Bacon, Admiral R., Jellicoe, p.289-90.
2 Ibid. p.289.
4 Official Despatches, p.478.
with light cruisers, to which communications with the Commander-in-Chief were usually left.

Less excusable is the inaction of the rear units of the Grand Fleet. Capital ships of the High Sea Fleet were seen by Revenge at 12.30, Valiant at 11.35, Thunderer at 10.30 and Malaya at 11.40. None of these sightings was reported to Jellicoe, the usual excuse being that the captains were reluctant to break radio silence and give the position of the fleet away to the enemy.

Some blame for the escape of the German fleet, however, must be apportioned to Jellicoe. Although poorly served by the Admiralty and his captains, he showed little initiative himself during this period. When disposing the fleet, he neglected to inform the destroyer flotillas of his own position or the approximate position of the enemy. During the night, from the bridge of the Iron Duke, although Jellicoe saw the "glare of the starshell and occasional searchlights" to the north, he made no attempt to radio his light forces and merely assumed "that engagements between our destroyers and the German destroyers and supporting light cruisers were in progress". The need to maintain radio silence can hardly be accepted as an excuse for this lapse, for an examination of the signal book reveals that almost 100 signals were sent by ships of the Grand Fleet between 10.00 p.m. on May 31st and 2.00 a.m. on June 1st.

Thus the battle of Jutland ended as an inconclusive stand off. The British lost 14 ships (including 3 battle cruisers) and 6,097 officers and men, the Germans 11 ships (including 1 battle cruiser and 1 pre-dreadnought battleship) and 2,551 officers and men. Although the British had suffered heavier

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(2) Jellicoe, Proposed Appendix to the Grand Fleet, Jellicoe Papers, Add/Mss 49040.
(3) Ibid.
losses, the German fleet had been driven back to harbour and many of its ships had been heavily damaged.

A comparison of the overall damage sustained by the two fleets is interesting. On June 2nd, the 6 out of 9 battle cruisers which remained to Jellicoe were 90% effective, whereas of the 4 out of 5 battle cruisers left to Scheer, only 1 was effective. Thus, while the British Fleet had suffered more losses, its remaining ships had suffered less damage. Moreover, while 3 British battle cruisers had blown up, this was due not to their thinner armour but to lack of protection against flash penetration to the magazines. German ships had this protection installed after a lucky accident at the Dogger Bank had revealed that their magazines were not flash proof.

Did Jutland therefore prove the superiority of German materiel? The results of the battle are often used to demonstrate the inferiority of the British battle cruiser type, all of which had much thinner belt armour than their German counterparts. The German ships on the other hand were said to be "nearly unsinkable". Four reasons are usually given for this - greater internal sub-division, better damage control, wider beams and the inefficiency of the British shells. The first three points are obvious factors but were the British shells so much worse than the German as Marder and others have claimed? The table below gives the number of hits scored on the British and German battle cruisers until approximately 6.15.

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(2) No German shell went through a plate thicker than 7½". Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p.172.
(3) This is now accepted by all authorities, e.g. see Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p.174.
(4) Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p.168
(5) Ibid.
(6) Ibid. p.169.
(7) The British ships which blew up are excluded as their destructions was caused by the one exceptional factor.
This is a critical time for it was then that Hipper tried to transfer his command. He found that the Lützow had to leave the line, the Derfflinger was in a "sorry condition", the Seydlitz was awash and the Von der Tann had no turrets in action. Only the Moltke was still effective.¹

Compare this state of affairs with the British ships. The Lion had only 1 turret out of action and the Princess Royal, Tiger and New Zealand were fighting with all guns. Yet the number of hits received by them was approximately equal to the number of hits received by the Germans. It is also worth noting that the Von der Tann was put out of action by only 4 hits.² Even if this figure is an underestimate, it is impossible that she could have received more than the 15 hits received by the Tiger which was still fully operational. How then can the British shells be held to be inferior to those of the enemy? If the British shells were inefficient as post-Jutland investigations seemed to show,³ then the German shells must have been just as bad.

Little separated the gunnery performances of the 2 sides. The German successes against Beatty showed the superior ability of their stereoscopic range-finders to locate and hold a target quickly. However, after these initial successes their performance deteriorated - "after 5.40 no British [capital] ship was hit at a range of over 10,500 yards" while the König, Lützow, Markgraf, Derfflinger, Helgoland, Kaiser and Seydlitz were hit at ranges of 15,000 yards and over.⁴

What of battle tactics? Jellicoe has been criticized for over-centralising control in the flagship and not allowing any initiative to his squadron commanders. A survey of the Grand Fleet Battle Orders in force at Jutland lends much weight to this criticism. The instructions are the

(1) Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p.101
(2) Given by Campbell in his list in the Beatty Papers and by MacIntyre D., Jutland, London, Pan, 1960, p.192-3.
(3) The Post Jutland Committee on shells drew attention to the fact that as early as 1914 it had been discovered that a 13.5" shell fired against a 6" plate at an angle of 20 degrees failed to penetrate. "Ammunition for Naval Guns", Technical History Section Admiralty, May 1920, TH 29.
size of a small volume and are obviously designed to cover every eventuality. Although at one point it is stated that it is "necessary to decentralize command to the fullest extent possible, and the Vice Admiral's commanding squadrons have discretionary powers to manoeuvre their squadrons independently"¹ this is then qualified by making these movements conform "generally to the movements of the Commander-in-Chief" and qualified still more by laying down the principle that the "Dreadnought fleet as a whole keeps together."² Also, although emphasis is laid on using initiative to anticipate the wishes of the C-in-C, no mention is made of the role of squadron commanders in keeping the C-in-C informed. The necessity of keeping at long range (over 14,000 yards) in the early stages of the action was also stressed.³

Thus the Grand Fleet was to fight at long distance in a single line controlled from the flagship. This had obvious disadvantages in that it supposed a willingness on the German's part to engage in such an action though out-numbered. Also it pre-supposed that Jellicoe would be able to control a line of ships five miles long. However, Jellicoe's tactics had one supreme advantage which in his mind must have out-weighed these manifest drawbacks. Provided the Grand Fleet remained together, there was almost no chance of it being defeated. Division of the fleet could have led to the annihilation of a detached squadron which would have left the two fleets dangerously equal. Clearly Jellicoe considered this risk unacceptable. It can also be stated that no other naval commander during the war thought of fighting with a divided fleet. This of course includes Beatty when he became Commander-in-Chief.

Jellicoe's critics have also pointed out that given the enormous superiority of the British broadside, more decisive results could have been expected. They point to four occasions where Jellicoe's excessive caution

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(1) Grand Fleet Battle Orders, Adm. 116/1343.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid.
led him to throw away the opportunity to annihilate the High Sea Fleet. These are the initial deployment away from the enemy, the refusal to follow Scheer on his first and second turns away and the failure to bring the High Sea Fleet to action on the morning of June 1st. In fact, as has been shown, Jellicoe's tactics were not governed by excessive caution. The initial deployment of the fleet was made to obtain the best possible position. Important advantages accrued to the British fleet which would not have been obtained by any other deployment. Jellicoe did not pursue Scheer on the two occasions on which he turned away because the movements of the German fleet were obscured by mist and smoke. It is true that Jellicoe turned away from the German torpedo attack, but because of the unknown effect of torpedoes on a battle fleet this was standard practice, used by the supposedly daring Beatty at the Dogger Bank and by Hipper earlier in the afternoon during the battle cruiser encounter.¹ Nor was it Jellicoe's caution that led the High Sea Fleet to escape during the night of May 31st-June 1st. Jellicoe's contribution to that fiasco has been made clear but there is no doubt that had Scheer's intentions been estimated correctly, Jellicoe would have made every effort to renew the battle off Horns Reef on June 1st. In any case, visibility was extremely poor on that morning and the chances of the two fleets missing each other altogether must have been quite high.

It may be appropriate at this point to discuss the view that Jellicoe fought the battle of Jutland along rigidly preconceived lines as laid down in his famous memorandum to the Admiralty of October 1914. In that document he drew the Admiralty's attention to his belief that the German fleet would place great reliance upon the new weapons of mines and torpedoes. He thought a retirement of the German fleet would mean that their "intention was to lead us over mines and submarines, and (1) should decline to be so drawn".²

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¹ It was also the course recommended by Battle Cruiser Force Torpedo Sub-Committee. Report of Battle Cruiser Fleet Torpedo Sub-Committee 26/6/16, Adm. 137/2134.
² Jellicoe to the Secretary of the Admiralty 30/10/14, Adm. 137/995.
His answer to this movement would be to move "the battle fleet at very high speed to a flank before deployment". Jellicoe was anxious that the Admiralty should understand his tactics as he thought they might be construed as a refusal of battle, an interpretation he wanted to avoid at all costs in view of the current court-martial of Admiral Troubridge.

In fact, the battle of Jutland was not fought along these lines. The circumstances under which the two fleets met were quite different from those envisaged by Jellicoe in October 1914. At Jutland it was Scheer and not Jellicoe who had been drawn into a trap. There was therefore no chance that mine and submarine traps had been laid in advance by the Germans in waters adjacent to the scene of the action. Jellicoe realized this at once and the problem of these hidden dangers played no part in his tactics. As has been explained, Jellicoe did not refuse to follow the German fleet for fear of mine traps and submarine nests, but because at the crucial moment Scheer's movements were obscured from him. His movement "to a flank" was made to obtain a superior position, not to avoid these dangers, and was made after deployment, not before. Nor was he afraid that the High Sea Fleet would drop large numbers of mines in his path if he followed. By the time of Jutland he was "fairly certain that [the Germans] will not lay mines from ships which are intended to take part in a gun action". The relatively small number that could be dropped from light vessels could easily be avoided.

Historians love a decisive battle. Jutland was anything but that and so their discussions have tended to concentrate on what might have happened had there been a decision. On the result of a German victory these discussions have been short and uncontroversial. Britain's communications would have been cut, essential supplies would not have reached the army or the civilian population, peace on German terms would have been inevitable.

A British victory presents more imaginative possibilities. A recent

(1) Ibid.
(2) Jellicoe, Remarks on The Official History VIII, Cab. 45/269, Pt IV.
(3) Grand Fleet Battle Orders, Adm. 116/1343.
discussion of this question will be found in Arthur Marder's work on Jutland. He lists 5 far-reaching effects of a shattering British victory, four of which he regards as "completely convincing". The first effect is that troops kept in England to repel a German invasion could have been released to the Western Front. However, it is hard to see that this relatively small number of men could have decisively turned the scale in the Allies' favour. It is more likely that they would have been consumed in an extension or alternative to a Somme-type battle.

The second effect listed is that a British victory would have allowed the Grand Fleet to enter the Baltic. Once there it could have cut off iron ore supplies from Sweden, assisted in landing a Russian force on the Pomeranian coast, opened up a "supply route to the hard-pressed Russians, and so have prevented the Revolution in March 1917". The domination of the Baltic may have been a possibility though enemy submarines, mines and torpedo craft would have taken some toll and might have caused a hurried withdrawal. Possibly the Swedish iron ore route could have been cut. The landing of a Russian force in North Germany was a Fisher daydream. Amphibious landings require a well supplied, skilled, relatively mobile force, backed up by a sophisticated system of logistics to enable the force to be reinforced and re-supplied. Whether any unit of the Russian Army in 1916 would have fulfilled these criteria is highly doubtful. In any case the Germans, operating on interior lines and in possession of a good railway system, would always have been able to reinforce their armies faster than the invaders. The result could not have been in doubt.

That a victory at Jutland could have prevented the Russian Revolution relies on the theory that it was a shortage of supply that caused the Russian defeats and it was those defeats that caused the revolution. If only Allied

(1) Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.3, p.211.
ships could have reached the Russians, the argument runs, the victories that would have followed would have saved the Czar's regime. There are several dubious assumptions here. The first is that the Allies had unlimited shipping available to supply Russia. This was by no means the case. In 1916 Russia had received, via the main supply route, the White Sea, 2½ million tons of supplies. It was planned in 1917, by straining resources to the limit, to carry 2.7 million tons. Thus it would have only been possible to increase supplies to Russia by 200,000 tons, even if the Baltic had been open. It should be noted that this decision was made before the unrestricted submarine campaign had influenced shipping estimates. There would have been little point in increasing supplies to Russia substantially anyway, because Russian communications were inadequate to handle them. By 1917 100,000 tons of supplies had built up at Murmansk, of which only 3,000 tons could be shifted daily. No doubt the opening of the Baltic ports would have enabled the handling of supplies to have been speeded up, but it is hard to see how even the existing short fall could have been reduced. In any case, the Russian problem was not shortage of supplies. By January 1917 the Russian supply of artillery was higher than the French figure for August 1916 and over double the British figure for the same month. Also, in early 1917 the Russians had a shell reserve of 3,000 rounds per gun (adequate even by Western Front standards) and later in the year the total shell reserve rose to 18 million shells. As Norman Stone brings out, it was the lack of organization and trained personnel to use the material produced rather than material shortages that caused the Russian downfall.

The third and fourth effects listed by Marder are the influence that a British victory would have had on the submarine war. It is claimed that submarines, deprived of the support of the High Sea Fleet, could have been

(1) Fayle, Seaborne Trade V.3, p.33.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Stone N., The Eastern Front, p.158.
(5) Ibid. p.211.
blocked in, presumably by mines or destroyer flotillas. However, with their main fleet gone, the Germans would surely have commenced unrestricted submarine warfare earlier, possibly in July or August 1916. Any immediate attempt to block the Heligoland Bight with mines must have failed because the British did not produce an effective mine until April 1917. These mines would not have been ready in any quantity before 1918, by which time convoy had already thwarted the submarine. There is no reason to believe that destroyer flotillas, released from the Grand Fleet, would have been any more successful. To be effective these flotillas relied on hydrophone equipment and depth charges, neither of which was perfected until 1918. Even then destroyer packs only accounted for a small percentage of submarines destroyed.

Furthermore, the answer to unrestricted submarine warfare did not necessarily lie in sinking submarines. The essential problem was to prevent merchant ships being sunk. This was solved by making targets so hard to find (by grouping them in convoys) that the vast majority got through without being sighted by the submarines.

The last point made by Marder is the effect that a British victory would have had on the morale of both sides. Obviously British morale would have been raised by a "new Trafalgar"¹ but it is hard to see that this would have had any tangible effect on the duration of the war. A German defeat would have been a great blow to the Central Powers but even Marder is not convinced that this would have been decisive. He comments, "it is very unlikely that [a defeat] ... would have resulted in an early German surrender. The Fleet had nothing like the prestige of the Army in Germany"².

Churchill's chapters on the Battle of Jutland deal with events which took place while he was out of office. For the first time he is describing events in which he did not participate. One advantage we might expect from this section is that Churchill will be able to take a more detached view, his

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² Ibid.
distance from the scene giving him a truer perspective on the major controversies and issues. On the other hand, it must be realized that these chapters could suffer from a serious drawback. The first two volumes were enlivened and informed by the extensive use of Admiralty documents and sources of information. For this period Churchill is cut off from this inside information. Could we expect then that Churchill's account, though more detached, will in some ways be less valuable to the reader because of a lack of proper documentation? These questions will have to be kept in mind during the course of the following discussion.

Given Churchill's interest in the naval war, it is somewhat surprising to find him claiming that he took no interest in the Battle of Jutland until he began planning the third volume of The World Crisis. He told Keyes in August 1924, "This is the first time I have ever read the story of the Battle of Jutland. I had only the vaguest idea of what had taken place".¹ In fact he had written on Jutland in the London Magazine of October 1916 and was of course the author of the revised Admiralty communiqué of June 3rd.² However, it was no doubt true that he knew little about the detailed course of the battle and, this being the case, he began to cast about for material to read and for some expert naval advice. He contacted Beatty, at that time First Sea Lord, who put Kenneth Dewar from the naval staff at his disposal.³ Dewar, with his brother Alfred, was responsible for the compilation of the controversial "Naval Staff Appreciation of Jutland", which was very critical of Jellicoe and was called by him "a purely B[attle] C[ruiser] F[leet] account looked at with BCF eyes".⁴ This was probably the first account of the battle read by Churchill who thought it "admirable"⁵ and, although he was to read

(1) Churchill to Keyes 25/8/24, Churchill Papers 8/196.
(3) Churchill to Keyes 19/6/26, Keyes Papers 15/5.
many other narratives of the battle, including the more pro-Jellicoe Harper Record,¹ it will be seen that it was Staff Appreciation which made the greatest impression on him.

Others to assist Churchill on this section were Keyes and Beatty who both read the chapters in draft and made detailed criticisms. The effect of these advisers on Churchill's narrative will be revealed in the course of the discussion.

Churchill's account of the battle opens with a brief discussion of German naval tactics since the early months of the war. These he characterizes as "cautious and even timid", a result which he attributes to Beatty's action off Heligoland in August 1914.² This not only greatly exaggerates the result of that battle³ but ignores the bombardments of Lowestoft, Scarborough and Hartlepool in the latter months of 1914, which hardly indicates that the German navy was cautious or timid during this period.

Churchill then turns to the disposition of the British Fleet. He gives the arguments for and against the 70 mile gap between Beatty and Jellicoe,⁴ but does not mention the good tactical reasons (Beatty to the south to prevent a raid on the east coast, Jellicoe to the north to prevent an attack on the 10th Cruiser Squadron) which led Jellicoe to so dispose his squadron.

No section of The World Crisis provoked more controversy than Churchill's criticisms of the handling of the 5th B.S. in the opening phase of the battle.⁵ A lively correspondence on the subject was opened in the columns of The Times and Churchill was even accused of bringing on the heart attack suffered by the unfortunate Evan-Thomas shortly after the publication of Volume 3 of The World Crisis. Churchill's account is highly critical of

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¹ Churchill to Keyes 25/8/24, Churchill Papers 8/196.
² The World Crisis, p.991.
³ See Chapter 5.
⁴ The World Crisis, p.992-3.
⁵ Ibid. p.994-5.
Evan-Thomas but modern scholarship will probably endorse his view that whatever qualities Evan-Thomas showed as a commander, initiative was not among them. However, it must be stated that Churchill's view of this incident lacks balance. Of course he could hardly be expected to know the reasons given after the war by Evan-Thomas for his actions and in any case they smack too much of hindsight to be readily accepted. But as was shown earlier, there are some points in the Admiral's favour. Churchill fails to mention that if the original signal at 2.32 had been sent by W/T instead of by flags, surely a reasonable course given the notorious difficulty in reading the Lion's signals, there could have been no confusion. He also does not make clear that the 2.30 signal was made specifically to Beatty's light forces, which was why it was ignored by the 5th B.S. Furthermore, Churchill does not mention the failure of the Tiger to pass Beatty's 2.32 signal on to the Barham and it is doubtful if he was aware that such an arrangement existed.¹

Churchill is on firmer ground in defending Beatty's decision not to turn and close the 5th B.S. He states that Beatty knew that the British Battle Cruisers were a superior force to any German squadron likely to be in the area.² He does not mention that Beatty's reasoning must have been based on the Admiralty signal which placed the flagship of the German battle fleet in harbour. Nor does Churchill discuss the possibility put forward by Jellicoe mentioned earlier, that as the German squadron was coming north, Beatty had time to concentrate on the 5th B.S. and still cut the Germans off from their base.

Churchill's description of the battle cruiser action is in the main accurate but in three important areas his account cannot be accepted. It is not clear from Churchill's account that the shooting of the German ships was

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¹ In a draft letter to The Times Churchill stated that the Barham's log recorded receipt of Beatty's message at 2.37. He concluded that this must have been a mistake as the signal was hauled down at 2.32. In fact, as shown earlier this message almost certainly came from the Tiger. Churchill Papers 8/212.

² The World Crisis, p.995.
was much more accurate than the British, particularly in the early phase of the battle. The number of hits scored (44 v. 17) is not recorded and the impression is left that, apart from the unlucky destruction of two British battle cruisers, the gunnery of both scouting forces was approximately equal. Furthermore, he describes the muddle over the fire distribution signal thus; "The chances of the battle on either side led to discrepancies in the selection of targets, and sometimes two British ships were firing at one German, while another was ignored, or vice versa".¹ By using a neutral phrase such as "the chances of the battle" Churchill glosses over the fact that an actual mistake was made and neatly avoids blaming anyone. Moreover, his "vice-versa" implies that similar mistakes were made by Hipper's squadron when there is no evidence to suggest that this was so. Thus, the reader is left with the erroneous impression that both sides were of equal incompetence. This impression, reinforced by the fatalism of "the chances of the battle", subtly deflects criticism from the British battle cruiser squadron.

The second area of dubious accuracy concerns the 5th B.S. Churchill assigns all the blame for that squadron's delayed turn at 4.53 to Evan-Thomas. He states that "the Rear-Admiral, having been slow in coming into action, was inclined to be slow in coming out".² But as has been shown, Evan-Thomas' failure to turn earlier was the result of his not having seen Beatty's 4.40 signal until 4.57. No doubt Evan-Thomas demonstrated his usual lack of initiative but the system of signalling used by the flagship can hardly be excluded from blame. Furthermore, Churchill does not discuss the other objectionable features of the signal mentioned above (turn in succession instead of together, turn to starboard instead of to port) or investigate the possibility that a turn together would have produced a less hazardous situation.

¹ The World Crisis, p.997.
² Ibid. p.1002.
To sum up, Churchill's description of the opening phase of the battle is very favourable to Beatty. The repeated signalling errors of the battle cruiser fleet are glossed over and the blame largely assigned to Evan-Thomas for not anticipating Beatty's intentions correctly. Also, the fact that Beatty had been out-maneuvered and out-fought by Hipper is not made clear by Churchill although he is correct in saying that the British had the better of the later stages of the run north.

For the clash of the battle fleets Churchill invites the reader to "take his mental station on the bridge of the Iron Duke." He correctly stresses that Jellicoe's prime need at this moment was for information about the enemy and that he could get it in two ways; by W/T from the Battle Cruiser Fleet already engaged with Scheer or by sending forward his own scouts to obtain visual contact with the two fleets. We have already seen that the information passed on to Jellicoe by the Battle Cruiser Fleet was sparse and often inaccurate. Churchill excuses Beatty on the grounds that he had no time to pass on signals "while in heavy action" himself. Yet it was established earlier that for some of the time during the run to the north Beatty was not in action and, although during this phase he was at times out of contact with the German fleet, he could easily have informed the C-in-C of Scheer's last known position and of the loss of the Queen Mary and the Indefatigable. Churchill praises Goodenough for his attempts to inform the flagship but does not mention the failure of the 1st and 3rd L.C.S.s to obtain information and, perhaps more surprisingly, the failure of the 5th B.S. to report visual contact with Scheer. Instead Churchill blames Jellicoe for not sending forward the fast cruisers of the 4th L.C.S. to obtain information for himself. To a certain extent this criticism is valid.

(1) The World Crisis, p.1006.
(2) Ibid. p.1008.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid. p.1010.
These ships could have been sent forward any time after Jellicoe learned that the two fleets were in action at 2.34. Jellicoe's unconvincing defence, that by 5.40 these ships would only have been 10 to 12 miles ahead of the battle fleet, is obviously based on a much later time of despatch than 2.34. The gap could in fact have been much greater than 10 to 12 miles, as these ships were 9 knots faster than the dreadnought fleet.\(^1\) However, Churchill has failed to realize that during this time information, which Jellicoe had on the whereabouts of the German fleet, was based on inaccurate reports. In fact, Jellicoe believed it to be much further to the east and there is no guarantee that his scouts would have met Scheer even had they been sent out.

After describing in an uncontrovertial manner the minor disasters which on the British side attended the closing of the two battle fleets,\(^2\) Churchill turns to Jellicoe's deployment of the Grand Fleet. He discusses the two alternatives which Jellicoe believed were possible, namely, deployment on the port versus the starboard wing. Although not blaming Jellicoe for choosing the "safer course",\(^3\) Churchill concludes that

"[in the light of present knowledge] he could have deployed on the starboard wing without misadventure. The 5th Battle Squadron... was in fact about to take the van ahead of the Marlborough's division of older Dreadnoughts. Beatty's battle cruisers were already steaming upon the exact course. Still farther ahead in front of all Hood in lively comprehension was about to wheel into the line".\(^4\)

In fact, this picture of exactitude and order at the head of the British line is quite misleading and presumably results from a postwar study of the battle charts. From a diagram it can be seen that the 5th B.S. (minus of course the Warspite) would eventually have come into battle at the head of the line, but it is by no means certain that they could have arrived before the fire of the High Sea Fleet became effective. In any case, Evan-Thomas

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(2) See The World Crisis, p.1011 and p.1013.
(3) Ibid. p.1016.
(4) Ibid.
would have masked the fire of the Marlborough's division while providing a concentrated target for the leading German ships. Beatty was further to the east and too fully engaged with Hipper to relieve some of the pressure on the leading British ships. The same objections apply to Hood who was even further away. Thus the principal objection to the starboard deployment, noted earlier, that the head of the British line could have been smothered with fire from at least seven powerful German ships, still holds. Moreover, the manoeuvre would still have risked a mass torpedo attack from German destroyers. Finally, even if Churchill had been correct, Jellicoe had none of Churchill's "present knowledge".

Churchill then discards both of these alternatives, claiming that "out of a tangle of uncertainties and out of a cruel dilemma...[there] was a sure, prudent and glorious middle course". ¹ This was the controversial deployment on the centre column. The dangers in this manoeuvre have already been set down and even Churchill admits it was a "complicated evolution". ² Yet he still puts it forward as the ideal solution, ignoring the fact that Jellicoe could hardly risk having the Grand Fleet fall into disarray at this critical moment to gain a mere 4,000 yards. ³ The answer to Churchill's point that the Grand Fleet was not under fire when deployment commenced and therefore quite safe ⁴ is that the fleet would come under fire during deployment on the centre column and this made it imperative that no confusion occurred. Also, it is hard to see why Jellicoe, by adopting this deployment, "would have retained the greatest measure of control over his Fleet", ⁵ as Churchill claimed. Jellicoe would have been at the very tip of a line of ships 5 to 6 miles long instead of in the centre of the line. In this situation the rear squadrons would have been beyond his control altogether.

(1) The World Crisis, p.1016.
(2) Ibid. It is certain that Churchill got this idea from reading the Naval Staff Appreciation which also advocates the centre deployment. The deployment diagrams used by Churchill on page 1009 were sent to him by Kenneth Dewar, one of the authors of the study. Dewar to Churchill 10/11/26, Churchill Papers 8/204.
(3) The World Crisis, p.1009.
(4) Ibid. p.1016.
(5) Ibid.
unless a system of signal relays was improvised, a difficult feat in the midst of battle. Presumably Churchill's answer to this would be that Jellicoe was at fault for not making the fleet familiar with the centre column deployment, but it is doubtful if a manoeuvre involving three groups of ships steaming in different directions at the critical moment before battle is joined would have been practical under any conditions.

The advantages obtained by the British from the starboard deployment are not mentioned by Churchill. His total prejudice against the movement is indicated by the fact that he describes it as a "retirement".¹ He does not explain how a manoeuvre, which cut off Scheer from his base, crossed his T, and brought a concentrated fire to bear on the head of his line in such conditions of light that the enemy could hardly reply, could possibly be regarded as a retirement.

Churchill's next assertion is that Jellicoe missed a good opportunity for destroying at least two or three of the enemy's older battleships, the pre-Dreadnought "Deutschlands". He believes that this could have been accomplished by detaching the four (in fact, there were only three) - Churchill has forgotten the crippled Warspite) Queen Elizabeths to the disengaged side of the enemy to attack the old German ships. It was shown earlier that Jellicoe did not have the information about the composition or position of the German fleet necessary to order such a movement and that in any case it would have been almost impossible to execute. Furthermore, Churchill was apparently not aware that the squadron risked being trapped by the High Sea Fleet after their first battle turn. How Jellicoe was to communicate with the squadron with the Admiral's W/T out of action is another problem not discussed. Finally, even supposing the movement had been possible, his contention that Scheer would have been forced to rescue these ships and thus commit himself to battle is not supported by previous experience. For

(1) The World Crisis, p.1016.
example, the Blucher was left to her fate at the Dogger Bank and Von Pohl abandoned Hipper's entire squadron during the Scarborough raid.

The later editions of The World Crisis have nothing to say about the manoeuvering of the British Fleet at the time of Scheer's first turn away. No mention is made of Jellicoe's "failure" to pursue the German fleet at this stage. However, in the 1st Edition of Volume 3 Churchill had Jellicoe turning away from the torpedo stream "according to his long-resolved policy".¹ This section was later dropped, probably on the advice of Kenneth Dewar, who told Churchill that he doubted very much if this was the correct reason for Jellicoe's turn.² Apparently Churchill was not prepared to credit Jellicoe with any tactical reason for making the turn (it will be remembered that Jellicoe was anxious to ensure that Scheer remained cut off from his base) and in the later editions of The World Crisis only the movements of the German fleet are given during this period and no explanation at all is offered for Jellicoe's movements.

Churchill returns to the attack on Jellicoe by criticizing the turn away from the torpedo attack which accompanied Scheer's second battle turn. He states that Scheer's mistake "might well have been fatal to the Germans",³ and castigates Jellicoe for not turning towards the attack and dividing the Fleet with the object of catching the disarrayed High Sea Fleet between two fires. This criticism is hardly justified. We saw earlier that it would have been impossible for Jellicoe to divide his squadrons for the exact position of Scheer was not known. Nor of course did Jellicoe know that the High Sea Fleet was retreating in disarray. Also, division of the Fleet would have risked the annihilation of the detached squadron if any miscalculation was made. Moreover, if Bacon's calculations outlined above are accepted as being even approximately accurate, Jellicoe could not have caught the Germans before dark, even if he had turned towards the torpedo attack.

¹ The World Crisis, 1st Edition, p.152.
³ The World Crisis, p.1022.
Furthermore, Churchill does not state that turning towards a torpedo attack involved much more risk than a turn away (according to Frost six times the risk). Commanders on both sides (including Beatty and Hipper) invariably turned away from torpedo attacks during the course of the war.

The account of the daylight action at Jutland ends with a discussion of Beatty's "follow me" signal. This section was only added after the proof stage had been reached\(^1\) and was included on the advice of Kenneth Dewar.\(^2\)

Not surprisingly it follows closely Dewar's own account in the Naval Staff Appreciation. Churchill implies that only Beatty sought to renew the action during these hours.\(^3\) As has been shown, this was not correct as the van of the Grand Fleet was steering more directly for Scheer at this moment than was Beatty. Also, Jellicoe did not allow a quarter of an hour to pass before acting on Beatty's message as Churchill states.\(^4\) He acted on it as soon as he read it, which was a quarter of an hour after it was received on the Iron Duke. In any case, Jerram's squadron, which was leading the Grand Fleet, could not have acted on Beatty's suggestion as Churchill implies because Beatty was out of sight. Nor could Jerram have caught Beatty and participated in the last action of the battle as Churchill believed. His squadron had been steaming at over 18 knots for more than half an hour. 20\(\frac{1}{2}\) knots was its maximum speed. Thus at 8.20, when Beatty was in action, Jerram would still have been 5 to 6 miles astern.

How does Churchill deal with the problems which faced Jellicoe at the beginning of the night action? We saw earlier that there were three main escape routes open to Scheer. To these Churchill adds a fourth, the Kattegat route. Churchill regards it as unlikely because he claims Scheer could have been brought to battle during the next day although it would have given the British a "long day to chase".\(^5\) Still, he thinks that Jellicoe

(2) Dewar to Churchill 10/11/26, in Ibid. 8/204.
(3) The World Crisis, p.1022.
(4) Jellicoe, The Grand Fleet and Jutland, Jellicoe Papers, Add/Mss 49041.
(5) The World Crisis, p.1027.
should have guarded against the possibility by sending a few light cruisers "to watch the area".  But even if Jellicoe had done this and the cruisers had seen the High Sea Fleet and informed Jellicoe at once, there was no chance that the British could have caught the Germans that day. The distance between the two fleets would have been approximately 150 miles and the British fleet was certainly not more than 4 knots faster than the German. It would have therefore taken 38 hours to overhaul Scheer, a very long day indeed.

Of the remaining three escape routes available to Scheer, Churchill is critical of Jellicoe for concluding that the southerly (Ems route) was the most likely. His opinion that this decision was "contrary to the main weight of the evidence" is in agreement with the arguments advanced previously. Where Churchill fails in this section is in not bringing out the part played by the Admiralty in Scheer's escape. He quotes only the amalgamated message sent by them to Jellicoe whereas, if he had given the three intercepts on which this was based, Admiralty culpability would have been made much clearer. Churchill must have been aware of the existence of these messages because they were quoted in the Official History published four years before this volume of The World Crisis. On the other hand, Churchill might not have known about the further seven messages decoded by the Admiralty and not passed on to Jellicoe. Alternatively, Corbett, the official historian, was prevented from quoting them and the same censorship could have been imposed on Churchill. A less understandable omission is Churchill's failure to comment on the fact that no British light craft reported Scheer's passage through their flotillas to Jellicoe during the night encounters and that this omission also applied to heavy units of the Grand Fleet, including two ships of the 5th B.S.

Churchill now proceeds with an examination of the materiel used by the British and German fleets. He concludes that because of their better dis-

(1) The World Crisis, p.1027.
(2) The World Crisis, p.1029.
tribution of armour, German battle cruisers were superior to the British types. Yet, in the next paragraph Churchill accepts that flash penetration to the magazine almost certainly destroyed two of the three British battle cruisers that were sunk. It will be remembered that this defect was not a matter of superior design for at the Dogger Bank the turret of the Seydlitz was penetrated in a similar manner to the Queen Mary, Indefatigible and Invincible.\(^1\) Furthermore, Churchill states on the next page that the heaviest German shell only managed to penetrate 7\(\frac{1}{4}\)" armour.\(^2\) As noticed earlier, British battle cruisers all had heavier armament than this. Churchill thus destroys his own argument but still leaves the impression that Jutland proved the inferiority of British battle cruiser design.

This impression is compounded by a further paragraph in which Churchill compares the folly of the Fisher-Jellicoe regime which first adopted the battle cruiser type with his own foresight in cancelling the 1912-13 battle cruiser programme and substituting for them the fast battle ships of the Queen Elizabeth class.\(^3\) Churchill's point that these ships proved better value for money than battle cruisers can be readily accepted but his aversion to battle cruisers was by no means as total as the impression given here. It was under Churchill's administration that the battle cruisers Courageous, Glorious and Furious (called the Outrageous, Uproarious and Spurious in the Fleet\(^4\)) were laid down. Only the first two were completed. They had 3" armour and 4 x 15" guns and have been described as "the most half-baked ideas ever produced by British naval architects".\(^5\) No doubt the common denominator between these ships and the earlier battle cruisers was Fisher, but the fact is that Churchill was no more able to withstand his ideas in 1915 than was Jellicoe eight years before.

In The World Crisis Churchill accepted the orthodox opinion that British shells were inferior to those used by the Germans, although at one stage he

\(^1\) The World Crisis, p.1036.  
\(^2\) Ibid. p.1037.  
\(^3\) Ibid. p.1035-6.  
\(^4\) Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.2, p.96.  
\(^5\) Preston, Battleships of World War I, p.157.
thought the difference between the two "much exaggerated". Evidence was brought forward previously which would indicate that this latter belief might have been more accurate. However, in the letter to Bridgeman quoted above Churchill was prepared to accept responsibility for the poor standard of British shells. He wrote, "I suppose I am to blame for our shells not being as good as the German. I assumed our constructors and ordnance experts were the last word in their science". In fact it was during Churchill's administration that 13.5" shells were found to be defective and there were therefore good reasons why he should have not gone on trusting the experts. However in The World Crisis Churchill is silent on his own responsibility for the poor state of British shells and he is merely content to warn Naval Ordinance Boards against the complacency which allowed that situation to develop.

We have seen that Churchill has been very critical of Jellicoe's conduct of the battle. On the other hand, he is very conscious of the "unique" responsibilities of the British C-in-C and tries to give them full weight in his account.

"His responsibilities were on a different scale from all others. It might fall to him as to no other man - Sovereign, Statesman, Admiral or General - to issue orders which in the space of two or three hours might nakedly decide who won the war....Jellicoe was the only man on either side who could lose the war in an afternoon".

How does Churchill think this responsibility affected Jellicoe's tactics?

"All he knew was that a complete victory would not improve decisively an already favourable naval situation, and that a total defeat would lose the war. He was prepared to accept battle on his own terms; he was not prepared to force one at a serious hazard. The battle was to be fought as he wished it or left unfought." Churchill apparently agrees with this strategy. He continues,

"A British Admiralissimo cannot be blamed for making these grave and solid reasons the basis of his thought and the foundation from which all his decisions should spring."
It was, therefore, not Jellicoe's general strategic conception with which Churchill disagreed, but the way in which that conception was translated into action. It was his opinion that "a perception that a decisive battle is not a necessity in a particular situation, and ought not to be purchased at a heavy risk, should not engender a defensive habit of mind or scheme of tactics." Thus the nub of Churchill's criticism is that while not risking the Grand Fleet, Jellicoe should have developed offensive tactics which sought to make the most of all opportunities to annihilate the enemy. Yet it was shown earlier that Jellicoe did not fight the battle of Jutland with a "defensive habit of mind" or use a "defensive scheme of tactics". The whole sweep into the southern section of the North Sea was offensive. His deployment, far from being defensive, was designed to gain solid advantages of light and position for the opening phases of the action. His circling movement after deployment was not a "retirement" but designed to maintain those advantages. If he failed to follow Scheer's second battle turn, it was not because he wished to avoid action but because he was unaware that the German fleet had turned away. From that moment until dark he continually sought to renew the action and, had Jellicoe been correct about Scheer's escape route, he would have undoubtedly sought a decision on the morning of June 1st. Why then did Churchill think that Jellicoe had fought a purely defensive battle? The most obvious reason is that Churchill was convinced that Jellicoe had fought the battle along the lines laid down in his letter to the Admiralty in October 1914. It is true that in the situation outlined Jellicoe proposed to adopt defensive tactics, but it was shown earlier that at Jutland Jellicoe soon realised that this situation did not apply. The letter, therefore, played no part in the C-in-C's thinking. However, it was Churchill who sanctioned the tactics laid down in the 1914 letter and he is obviously concerned to dissociate himself from them.

(1) The World Crisis, p.990.
A second reason is that Churchill has consistently looked at the battle from a theoretical point of view. He has studied the Naval charts without making himself familiar with the information available to Jellicoe at the time. By this method it is possible to see several "opportunities" lost through the use of defensive tactics. Only one example need be given. The 7.20 battle chart shows the High Sea Fleet retreating in disarray. The Grand Fleet, instead of immediately turning and pursuing it, "defensively" continues to steam in a southerly direction. To Churchill this looked like a missed opportunity to inflict a crushing blow on the enemy. In reality, with the limited amount of knowledge available to Jellicoe at the time, it was nothing of the kind. However, this theoretical approach is a constant element in Churchill's account.

There is a more general reason for Churchill's harsh treatment of Jellicoe. Not only was a "defensively-minded" commander against Churchill's natural inclination for the attack but also against "the best traditions of the Navy". To whom were future generations to look to maintain the "golden links" with such heroes as Rooke and Nelson? Not to Jellicoe, says Churchill, but to "Beatty and the battle-cruisers, to Keyes at Zeebrugge, to Tyrwhitt and his Harwich striking force". This is grossly unfair to Jellicoe while vastly overrating the contribution of such minor figures as Keyes and Tyrwhitt. In fact the main raison d'être of British seapower has always been to keep Britain's sea lanes open and to prevent the invasion of the homeland. This was Jellicoe's purpose as it was Nelson's. Nelson was able to achieve this purpose by a series of battles, culminating in Trafalgar. Jellicoe achieved the same results without a battle. This was not good enough for Churchill. Surely it would have been for Nelson?

Churchill's criticism of Jellicoe for over-centralising command has some substance. It was shown earlier how this hampered Jellicoe's conduct of the

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(1) The World Crisis, p.1039
(2) Ibid.
battle and robbed his subordinate commanders of what little initiative they had.

Churchill's discussion of the results which might have flowed from a British victory is full of interest. He was first inclined to believe that a "new Trafalgar" would have left the two antagonists approximately where they had been before. This was certainly the line he had taken in his London Magazine article of 1916. However, after reading the Naval Staff Appreciation he wrote to Keyes, "I am shaken in my view as to the small consequences which would have resulted from a complete victory at Jutland." But when the time came to write the Jutland chapters of The World Crisis he reverted to his original view. In the first proof he wrote,

"If the German Fleet had been decisively defeated on May 31, 1916, in battle off Jutland, that superb and glorious episode would not have decided the general course of the war. It would not have improved the control of the sea communications of the Allies by the British Navy. It would not have directly increased the stringency of the blockade. It would not have prevented the U-boat attack of 1917 which the Germans were actively preparing. On the contrary, it might well have led to a greater concentration of skilled men and resources upon the development of the U-boat campaign. It would not have supplied the Admiralty with the driving power and daring to attack the German naval bases in the Elbe and other river mouths in the North Sea....It would have brought the entry into the Baltic into immediate practical possibility. But that entry was a great new operation of war which in the absence of a German battle fleet, certainly in the presence of a reduced German fleet, would have presented features of extreme complexity and required long preparation. Moreover, the Russians at this date were no longer in a condition to profit from the British entry and control of the Baltic by descending with their armies upon the northern coasts and striking at Berlin....the disappearance of the German battle fleet would probably not have influenced the course of the war as a primary factor on land".

This paragraph brought a chorus of protests from Churchill's Naval advisers. Beatty and Dewar wrote to Churchill, urging him to change his mind. Keyes also strongly dissented and pencilled suggested amendments in the margin of the proof. The impact of this criticism can be seen in the

(1) Churchill to Keyes 25/8/24, Churchill Papers 8/196.
(2) Churchill Papers 8/158.
(4) Churchill Papers 8/158.
published version of this paragraph on page 983. On five of the seven points mentioned above Churchill completely reversed his stand and the other two were omitted. Most of Keyes's suggestions were accepted. Churchill now held that if the High Sea Fleet had been defeated, the Admiralty might well have moved against the German bases and this could have frustrated the U-boat attack. The difficulties accompanying a British entry into the Baltic are now forgotten and we find that this movement might have prevented the Russian revolution although Churchill admits that this is a "speculative question". (He had originally written 'highly speculative'). The aid which the Navy could have given the Army is now emphasized rather than played down. It is not known why Churchill changed his mind on this issue. No reasons for their points of view were advanced by Dewar, Beatty and Keyes in their correspondence with him. No doubt Churchill was more than willing to believe that decisive results should flow from a decisive battle. In the earlier discussion on this point considerable doubt was cast on the validity of this view. The conclusions reached were more in line with Churchill's first thoughts than with his published version and on this occasion it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Churchill was not well served by his advisers.

It can now be seen that neither expectation raised in the opening paragraph of this section came to pass. On the first issue, that of the availability of information, it is clear that Churchill's account has not suffered from a lack of documentary material. In fact through his naval advisers Churchill had access to expertise and unpublished sources available to few historians at the time. In minor ways his account has profited from these privileges. His maps and diagrams were all either taken from unpublished accounts or drawn especially for him. He was able to use papers prepared for him on such technical subjects as flash penetration and shell design. In such aspects therefore Churchill's account has been noticeably impaired by the fact that he was out of office.

(1) Churchill Papers 8/158.
However it is also clear that the second expectation, that Churchill's account would prove less partisan, has also not been fulfilled. The lavish praise of Beatty, which has been noted in the pre-Jutland chapters of *The World Crisis*, is continued in this section where Beatty's dubious tactics during the battle are completely overlooked. Conversely, the antipathy displayed towards Jellicoe in earlier chapters is again evident in Churchill's allocation of the whole blame for the indecisive daylight action and for Scheer's escape at night on to the Commander-in-Chief. It would therefore appear that Churchill has not been able to detach himself from the strong convictions which he formed during his period in office. This is especially true in relation to Beatty and Jellicoe where Churchill's attitudes to both men were formed in the pre-war years. This pro-Beatty anti-Jellicoe stand has also affected Churchill's choice of advisers for it is noticeable that they are all representative of only one facet of naval thinking on Jutland, the anti-Jellicoe school. The similarity of approach between Churchill and his advisers is often very obvious. It was noted earlier that Churchill's criticisms of Jellicoe were frequently based on a combination of hindsight and neglect of practical problems. Compare this with Dewar's approach which has also been described as savouring "too much of theoretical tactics combined with being wise after the event".1 Certainly Churchill made no attempt to balance his account by consulting experts more kindly disposed to the Commander-in-Chief. Beatty was able to comment on the draft chapters of *The World Crisis* but not Jellicoe, Keyes but not Bacon, Dewar but not Harper. Rather than providing a counterweight these men reinforced Churchill's prejudices and a partisan account was the result.

Note on August 19th

On August 19th a sortie was made by the High Sea Fleet towards the English coast. The plan was to bombard Sunderland and then lay minefields in which it was hoped to trap units of the Grand Fleet as they came south to intercept the bombarding squadron. There was also to be a U-boat trap. Churchill briefly describes the events of this day and again blames Jellicoe for allowing the Germans to escape. It has not been thought worthwhile to comment on his account in detail. One point concerning the writing of this section is however worth making. It has already been shown that one of Churchill's principal advisers on the Jutland chapter was Kenneth Dewar. Apparently he also wrote an account of the August 19th incident for Churchill and it is interesting to compare this account with Churchill's published in The World Crisis. In introducing the subject Dewar wrote,

"On the 19th August the High Sea Fleet approached the English coast with the intention of bombarding Sunderland, and in doing so offered Jellicoe one more chance of bringing it to action. The disposition of submarines off the British naval bases for the Jutland operations had met with no success. On this occasion the main flotilla of submarine boats was disposed in two lines on the probable tracks of the British Fleet, one off Blyth and one off the Yorkshire coast, whilst twelve of the Flanders flotilla were stationed off the Dutch coast (see chart). Four Zeppelins were patrolling between Peterhead and Norway, three off the British coast between Newcastle and Hull and one in the Flanders Bight."1

In The World Crisis Churchill's account of these dispositions reads,

"Nevertheless one last chance of bringing the German Fleet to action was offered. Within six weeks of Jutland, on the evening of August 18, Admiral Scheer again put to sea. His object was to bombard Sunderland; and his hope, to draw the British Fleet, if it intervened, into his U-boat flotillas. His main flotilla of seventeen U-boats was disposed in two lines on the probable tracks of the British Fleet; one off Blyth and one off the Yorkshire coast; while twelve boats of the Flanders flotilla were stationed off the Dutch coast. Four Zeppelins patrolled between Peterhead and Norway; three off the British coast between Newcastle and Hull, and one in the Flanders Bight."2

Obviously Churchill's account had been heavily based on Dewar and indeed, the remainder of Churchill's section on August 19th in The World Crisis is based

(1) Churchill Papers 8/186.
(2) The World Crisis, p.1031
practically work for word on Dewar's paper. The influence of Dewar on Volume 3 of The World Crisis will again be encountered when Churchill's chapter of the 1917-18 submarine war is discussed.
CHURCHILL AND BRITISH STRATEGY 1916-18

It was seen in the first two volumes of The World Crisis that Churchill was an unrelenting opponent of the strategy adopted by the Allies on the Western Front. In volume three of his book Churchill continues his onslaught against the plans adopted for 1916 and 1917. It has been decided to discuss separately three important features of Churchill's criticisms of the Generals. First will be examined Churchill's critique of the general strategy adopted for 1916 - a critique in which he extends his strictures to the German High Command. Second, Churchill's account of the battle of the Somme will be considered, the only British battle of 1916-17 described in any detail in The World Crisis. Last, Churchill treatment of German and Allied casualty statistics and the arguments based on them will be analysed.

Churchill and Strategy in 1916

Churchill begins his discussion of strategy in 1916 with a survey of the choices facing the German Commander-in-Chief, Falkenhayn, in that year. Essentially, Churchill states, Falkenhayn's choices were two, "To attack the strong, or to attack the weak", that is to attack in the west or in the east. He continues,

"To contend that either of these theories was wholly and invariably right and the other wrong would be to press argument beyond the bounds of common sense. Obviously if you can beat your strongest opponent in the hostile combination you should do so. But if you cannot beat your strongest opponent in the main theatre, nor he beat you...then surely it is time to consider whether the downfall of your strongest foe cannot be accomplished through the ruin of his weakest ally, or one of his weaker allies."

Churchill considers that it was in Germany's true interest to attack in the East. He states "The vital need for Germany was to break the blockade" and adds that this could only have been done by acquiring the rich food growing areas of the Ukraine. An attack on Russia by Germany would have had the

(1) The World Crisis, p. 945.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid., p. 957.
(4) Ibid., p.957 & p. 960.
added advantage for the Central Powers of isolating Roumania who with

"her 500,000 men and her precious supplies of corn and oil, would
have been brought into the war early, not late, and as an ally
and not as a foe. But the school of formula had vanquished the
school of fact, the professional bent of mind had overridden
the practical; submission to theory had replaced the quest for
reality. Attack the strongest at his strongest point, not the
weakest at his weakest point, was once again proclaimed the
guiding maxim of German military policy."1

Falkenhayn therefore turned his back on the East and attacked the French at
Verdun.

Readers of the earlier chapters will not be surprised to find Churchill
advocating an eastern policy for Germany. It is in fact his Dardanelles
strategy transferred to Berlin. Is there any reason to suggest that the
strategy would have proved more successful for the Germans in 1916 than it
had for the British and French in 1915? In a qualified sense the answer is
yes. The Germans had a much more important and coherent objective in the
East than did the Entente. The overthrow of Russia would have enabled
Falkenhayn to move vast numbers of troops to the main theatre. If this
could have been accomplished in 1917 instead of 1918 the immediate superiority
of the Germans might have proved decisive or at least enabled them to
negotiate an armistice on favourable terms. However, as Falkenhayn
realized, Germany did not have the resources to embark on such an undertaking
and even if large numbers had been taken from the west to attack the east,
the opening of the Anglo-French attack on the Somme must have meant their
return. Furthermore, the Russians in mid-1916 were far from beaten. Their
supplies of munitions had improved greatly in the first six months of the
year and Brusilov was to show that they still retained an offensive capacity.
Nor did the Germans have such dire need for an eastern campaign as Churchill
supposes. Several studies have shown that before 1917 the British blockade
was quite ineffective and that considerable amounts of produce flowed into

(1) The World Crisis, p. 961.
Germany the early years of the war. The much publicized "turnip winter" of 1916 seems to have been caused by a breakdown of the German system of food distribution due to the over-utilisation of the railways by the military, rather than by the blockade. Finally Churchill's strategy assumes that the adhesion of Roumania to the Central Powers mattered. Our earlier discussion of the state of the Roumanian army would indicate that it was very unlikely that these peasant levees would have tipped the scale either way. Even the Russians might have attacked the Roumanians with some prospect of success.

It can of course be argued that the strategy eventually adopted by Falkenhayn proved a dismal failure and that Churchill is justified in pointing out an alternative. However, it is likely that in 1916 Germany simply did not have the power to force a decision on either front. Standing, as the German army did in 1916, on enemy territory a prudent strategy would have been to conserve life and remain on the defensive in the hope that war weariness would cause the allies to negotiate. But these Fabian tactics had no appeal for Falkenhayn in 1916, nor to Churchill ten years later in his commentary on "Falkenhayn's choice".

If Churchill's discussion of the dilemma facing the German High Command is open to a certain amount of criticism, it is a model of sober reflection compared to his section on the alternatives facing the allies in 1916. Churchill writes "the plan of British and Allied war which according to this account would best have served our interests in the year 1916 would have been a surprise attack upon the Dardanelles." He considers that this move would have parried a German thrust to the east, brought in Roumania, and brought aid to Russia, and so might well have been decisive. The force that Churchill would have used to execute his plan was the large number of

(2) Ibid., p. 118.
(3) The World Crisis, p. 953.
allied troops in Egypt and Salonica.

"A single mental conception would have transformed all the twenty allied divisions, sprawled in defensive or divergent functions, into a vast army crouching, under the cover of perfectly satisfactory explanations, for one swift convergent spring. Assuredly the enemy-Turks and Allies - were absolutely convinced that, dreading the fire that had burned us, we would never molest the Dardanelles again. Within two months of our evacuation they had withdrawn all their troops from the Gallipoli Peninsula except three divisions." 1

It is noticeable that in this discussion Churchill says nothing about the strategy to be adopted on the Western Front. However it is hard to see a call for a British offensive there could or would have been resisted once the French had been attacked at Verdun. Thus, as in 1915, the British would have found themselves supporting two offensives with only the munitions and reinforcements for one. As for Churchill's proposal that the Dardanelles be attacked again, it is not necessary to restate the arguments already produced to show why even a success at Gallipoli would not have greatly affected the course of the war. However, it should be mentioned that surprise in mounting an attack would not have been as easy to achieve as Churchill seems to believe. The marshalling of shipping for twenty divisions could hardly have gone unnoticed in the East and Churchill never mentions what "perfectly satisfactory explanations" could have been given as cover. Furthermore, nothing like twenty divisions could have been accommodated on the Gallipoli Peninsula and if a landing in the Gulf of Enos or on the Asiatic shore was proposed it must be remembered that to land one division over an open beach took about ten days. If this figure is multiplied by twenty it is obvious that the Turks could have brought in reinforcements in plenty of time to thwart the British plan. Also the Straits defences and minefields remained intact during 1916 and no easy passage would have been open to the Fleet. Finally, after the experiences of 1915 it is hard to believe that any responsible commander would have been prepared to undertake such an operation and it is noticeable that Churchill did not put it forward at the

(1) The World Crisis, p. 953.
time. Even in The World Crisis he apparently only added this section as an afterthought and one can only comment that he would have been better advised to have adhered to his original draft.

The Somme

In the Jutland chapters of The World Crisis we saw Churchill writing for the first time about events in which he did not participate. It was found, however, that because of his close involvement with the main protagonists on the British side he was hardly a detached observer. In this section we must now consider Churchill's account of a military event in which he took no part. Will he be any more successful in this case in constructing a balanced account or will his aversion to the Western Front, which has already been noted, lead him once more to take up a partisan position?

A common misapprehension about the writing of the chapters of The World Crisis which deal with post 1915 events should be dealt with at once. It has been claimed that for the 1916-18 period Churchill "lacked those primary sources which leant weight to the first two volumes of The World Crisis" and that "for much of his account he had to rely on external, published sources". In fact the Churchill Papers reveal that this was not the case. It will be remembered that in the course of writing volume 1 of The World Crisis Churchill sent his chapter on Antwerp to Sir John Edmonds, the compiler of the Official British History of the war, for comment. While Churchill was writing volume 3, this cooperation developed to a much greater extent. In fact the full extent of the remarkable collaboration between the two men is best illustrated by Churchill's chapter on the Somme. Edmonds, whose own volumes on the subject did not appear until the 1930's, seemed to be more than willing to supply Churchill with any documents that he needed.

(1) Churchill Papers, 8/96.
requested. To a certain extent, as will be shown, he also seems to have used Churchill as a means of putting forward ideas considered too frank for the Official History. In any case Edmonds supplied to Churchill all the General Staff appreciations relating to the Somme and Haig's reports and correspondence with Robertson. In addition he sent translations of various German accounts of the battle including "Die Schwaben an der Ancre" quoted by Churchill on p. 1045-6, "Die 27 Infanterie Division im Weltkrieg" quoted on p. 105 as well as his own account of "The Assault on the Orvillers Spur by the 8th Division" which forms the basis of Churchill's narrative on p. 1046-7. In the first two cases it is noticeable that Churchill quotes in the footnotes the names of the German originals but it seems very doubtful if he consulted the whole works and much more likely that he merely read translations provided by Edmonds. Edmonds helped Churchill in more direct ways. The description of the opening hours of the battle of the Somme which appears on p. 1044 of The World Crisis was entirely written by Edmonds and incorporated into the text without change by Churchill. However, when Edmonds saw the first draft of Churchill's Somme chapter (this unfortunately does not seem to have survived) he was unhappy with the tone of some of Churchill's criticisms of the British High Command. He suggested to Churchill that "in view of your high & esteemed position in the hearts of your countrymen I think you might cut out some of the sarcasm about the military leaders". Churchill responded positively to this suggestion.

"Of course the sarcasms and asperities can all be pruned out or softened. I often put things down for the purpose of seeing what they look like in print. Haig comes out all right in the end.

(1) Edmonds to Churchill 6/7/26, Churchill Papers 8/203.
(2) Edmonds to Churchill 10/7/26, Churchill Papers 8/189.
(3) Ibid. The same extract is quoted by Edmonds in Military Operations: France and Belgium 1916, V.1, London, Macmillan, 1932, p. 392-3 (Hereafter 1916 V.1)
(4) Churchill Papers 8/189.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Ibid.
(7) Edmonds to Churchill 6/7/26, Churchill Papers 8/203.
because of the advance in 1918. Without this the picture would be incomplete. As you know, this Somme chapter was written a very long time ago. I am anxious to vindicate my own appreciation of the position at the time, and of course my General argument against these offensives. But this Somme chapter certainly requires a strong addition showing the undoubtedly deep impression made upon the Germans by the wonderful tenacity of our attack. If you have anything that bears on this, perhaps you could bring it along with you."  

Unfortunately without the first draft there is no way of knowing exactly how Churchill went about toning down the chapter, though one example of an asperity "pruned out" does survive and will be quoted later. It is interesting to note that Churchill was motivated to write about the Somme partly to vindicate a contemporary cabinet memorandum which he had written. Perhaps the absence of a similar document concerning Passchendaele explains his lack of interest in that battle, no description of which appears in The World Crisis. The "balancing" German material was, as we have seen, supplied by Edmonds and appears on p. 1051 of The World Crisis. It is possible that he also suggested the quotation from Ludendorff's memoirs which discusses the terrible effect of the battle on the German Army which Churchill also uses.  

Churchill seems to have suggested some additions to his chapter which met with no response from Edmonds. Concerning the artillery aspect of the battle Churchill wrote "I think I ought to introduce into the Somme chapter some account of the creeping barrage and who has the credit for its inception. It surely was the one great new tactical feature at this stage to aid the offensive." This was an important point, for Western Front battles are often referred to as being totally lacking in innovations and as being essentially the same in 1918 as they were in 1915. This was of course not the case and the creeping barrage marked a major step forward in battle tactics. Unfortunately Edmonds does not seem to have responded to

(1) Churchill writes "defences" in the original, but this is clearly an error for "offensives".
(2) Churchill to Edmonds 7/7/26, Churchill Papers 8/203.
(3) See The World Crisis, p. 1051-2.
(4) Churchill to Edmonds 23/7/26, Churchill Papers 8/203.
Churchill's suggestion and possibly for this reason no mention of the creeping barrage is to be found in the Somme chapter of The World Crisis.\(^1\)

Eventually Edmonds was well satisfied with Churchill's efforts. He told Churchill "I can find nothing against your general line of argument"\(^2\) and "The Somme chapter is a work of art, it takes up every important factor and shows extraordinary insight and is perfectly fair".\(^3\) This was astounding praise from a historian whose published line of argument (that the Somme in terms of casualties and morale was a British victory) was so different from that adopted by Churchill in The World Crisis. Perhaps Edmonds underwent a comprehensive change of mind before he published, or perhaps he felt obliged in an official history to produce a document more sympathetic to Britain's military leaders. However, his unqualified praise of a chapter which contained an analysis of casualty statistics directly opposed to his own argument on this subject defies explanation.

No hint of the Edmonds-Churchill partnership leaked out over the years. Nor did Churchill ever acknowledge the help given him by Edmonds in the writing of The World Crisis. However this secrecy was not Churchill's wish, but Edmonds'. None of the British documents which he supplied to Churchill were generally available to other historians and there no doubt would have been an outcry if it had become known that Churchill was receiving special treatment. Edmonds' reaction to a possible public acknowledgement of his assistance is summed up in a letter he wrote to one of Churchill's research assistants in connection with a later book by Churchill, "The Eastern Front", "On no account should my name or mention of the Branch [Historical Branch, C.I.D.] appear. We should have all sorts of people clamouring for help, apart from possible trouble in Parliament.

Please thank W.S.C. for his kindly thought, but say it is wisest to omit

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(1) Churchill also suggested including descriptions of actions on September 25 and November 13 but Edmonds apparently concluded that these actions were too minor to be included in a general survey of the battle and Churchill accepted his advice. Churchill Papers 8/203.
(2) Edmonds to Churchill 8/7/26, in Ibid.
(3) Edmonds to Churchill 6/8/26, in Ibid.
reference to the Section and that I was glad to help in any way."

Only one other contribution was made to the Somme chapter by one of Churchill's advisers. Beaverbrook read the chapter and commented, "I have still a little pin prick for you. You preface to the chapter on the Somme a poem by Julian Grenfell on the delights of the healthy open air life in the trenches which rejoices the soldier. Surely this is a piece of irony!"

The poem referred to was possibly "Into Battle" which begins:

"The naked earth is warm with spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze;
And life is colour and warmth and light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
And who dies fighting has increase."

Apprently Churchill had not considered the quotation to be ironic but to demonstrate the attitude of self sacrifice which he considered characterized Britain's new armies. However to avoid any confusion he changed the quotation to a couplet from Siegfied Sassoon's poem...

"Pray God that you may never know
The Hell where youth and laughter go."

and it is hard to avoid the conclusion that as far as the Somme is concerned this is the more appropriate theme.

In dealing with the battle of the Somme Churchill's account makes four main points: that the Somme battlefield was the choice of the British as well as the French High Command; that the area was the most inappropriate possible from which to launch a major attack; that Haig aimed for a decisive rupture of the German line; that no attempt was made to camouflage the preparations for the battle. He then proceeds to say, in partial defence of Haig, that the British Commander-in-Chief was forced to attack before he was:

(2) Beaverbrook to Churchill 22/11/26, in Ibid. 8/204.
ready and then forced to continue the attack in order to relieve pressure on the French at Verdun and because of misleading information on the state of German morale provided by his own Intelligence Department. The validity of these points will now have to be considered as well as the account of the actual battle given in The World Crisis.

Churchill's first point is that a major mistake was made by the British and French Commanders in selecting "as the point for their offensive what was undoubtedly the strongest and most perfectly defended position in the world". Why Picardy was chosen for the main offensive in 1916 and by whom have always been matters of controversy. According to some authorities the location was chosen exclusively by the French and if this was the case Churchill is incorrect in including Haig in his strictures. In fact Joffre claims that it was he who first suggested the area to Haig and in early January Haig did report that he was working out plans for an attack to the north of the Somme while Foch considered an attack to the south. It is clear that Haig at this point only regarded the Somme as one of a number of alternative theatres of action, for on January 14th. he instructed Plumer to prepare plans for three different operations all of which were to take place in Flanders. Haig also spoke of decisive attacks having to take place at "several points" in order to break through. It has been inferred from this directive that Haig was opposed to an attack in the area of the Somme and would have preferred his northern alternatives. Clearly if this was the case Churchill's judgement that the Somme battlefield had been chosen by the British as well as the French High Command would have to be revised. However, it should be understood that what was contemplated by Joffre as the British contribution to the main battle at this point was not a large

(1) The World Crisis, p. 1040.
(3) Haig to Robertson 3/1/16, Robertson Papers, 1/27/6.
(5) Ibid., p. 125.
(6) Ibid., p. 132 (editorial notes by Blake).
scale attack as was eventually carried by the British on the Somme but a preliminary "wearing out" battle to be conducted two months before the main French offensive.¹ Haig was not in agreement with this strategy. He wanted any preliminary attacks to be made immediately before the main battle² and Joffre finally conceded this point on February 14th.³ It was Haig however, who first suggested that the British contribution might be increased to 25 divisions to form part of the main attack and in this case he agreed with Joffre that the location of the battle should be astride the Somme.⁴ Before planning could be further advanced the Germans attacked at Verdun. The whole French contribution to the Somme battle was now thrown into doubt and Haig told Kitchener that in the event of the British having to attack alone he favoured action on the Ypres-Armentiers front. He added though, that if the French had sufficient troops for the main attack the original plan should be adhered to.⁵

Is it possible from this contradictory evidence to decide exactly what the attitude of the British High Command to the Somme location was and consequently if Churchill is correct to include them in his indictment of those who chose the area? The following points can perhaps be isolated.

(1) Joffre first chose the Somme location probably because it was the point at which the British and French armies joined and therefore he would be able to a certain extent to control the scope and duration of British participation.

(2) Haig rightly regarded the British contribution to this attack as subsidiary to the main effort which would be made by the French on the Somme and by the British in Flanders - hence his instructions to Plumer on January 14th. to prepare plans for offensives in that area and his opinion that the decisive battles would have more than one location.

(3) In February, Haig came to see the virtues of an attack on a broad front

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¹ Edmonds Sir J., 1916 V.1, p. 27.
² Haig to Joffre 1/2/16, W.O. 158/14.
³ Haig Diary 14/2/16, Blake, p. 129.
⁴ Haig to Joffre 1/2/16, W.O. 158/14.
⁵ Haig Diary 25/2/16, Blake, p. 133.
and suggested that the British portion of the Somme attack be increased to form part of a major Franco-British offensive.

(4) When French divisions were diverted to Verdun Haig, considering that the British alone were not strong enough to obtain any worthwhile strategic objectives (which on the Somme front were quite distant), reverted to his northern schemes where important objectives such as strategic railways and the Belgian Coast were considered to be within striking distance of the front line.

(5) When the French announced that they were prepared to participate in the Somme offensive though on a reduced scale, Haig considered that the combined armies were strong enough to break the German line and allowed the joint attack to take place.

Thus Haig neither proposed the Somme battlefield as implied by Churchill nor strongly resisted it as stated by Haig's apologists. He apparently saw it as the area in which an attack on the broadest possible front could be made and he considered that this type of attack had the best chance of success. In either case the question is a great deal more complicated than is implied by Churchill in *The World Crisis*.

Churchill's second point is that he considered the Somme area to be unsuitable as a prospective battlefield because it was so strongly defended. But the question has to be asked, given the fact that it would have been necessary for the British have attacked somewhere in 1916, what easier alternative theatres of action did they have? To the north of Ypres there were impassable inundations: the area around the Lys and Loos was an industrial wilderness. Much of the French sector was even less promising. South of Verdun there are rivers, forests and mountains. Champagne and Artois had been the locations of the disastrous French attacks in 1915. This left the Somme and the Ypres salient and the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917 amply demonstrated the difficulties of attacking in Flanders. Thus the Somme as a location seems no worse than any other area and it is
noticeable that no alternative to that site is offered by Churchill in *The World Crisis*.¹

Although critical of Haig for choosing the Somme Churchill is of the opinion that Haig was forced to attack prematurely in order to relieve pressure on the French at Verdun and that the attack that was launched by the British on July 1st. must be viewed in this light. He states that "the call to attack was peremptory. Delay was impossible."² In fact Haig had agreed to attack on July 1st. as early as February 10th,³ although when the scope of the British attack was widened he attempted to delay the battle until the end of July or August.⁴ At a meeting with Joffre at the end of May Haig mentioned August 15th. as a possible date. Joffre replied that the "French Army would cease to exist if...[The British] did nothing till then"⁵ whereupon Haig reverted to July 1st. as the opening day of the British attack. It can be seen then that Haig was indeed forced by French pressure to attack earlier than he would have wished. It is also clear that the period of time involved was only a matter of six weeks at the most and it is hard to see that a delay of this order could have swung the balance Haig's way. No doubt the troops would have used the additional time to further rehearse the plan but the plan would have remained basically the same and this would probably have led to much the same result on August 15th. as on July 1st.

Churchill next turns to a discussion of Haig's objectives in fighting the battle. He claims that it is clear from the unprecedented artillery bombardment and the positioning of the cavalry near the front line that a major rupture of the German line was sought.⁶ This has been denied by others who have seen the main purpose of the battle as the relief of the French at

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¹ *The World Crisis*, p. 1060-1.
² *The World Crisis*, p. 1060-1.
³ Haig to Joffre 10/2/16, W.O. 158/14.
⁵ Haig Diary 26/5/16, Blake, p. 145.
⁶ *The World Crisis*, p. 1042-3.
Verdun and the killing of as many Germans as possible. Once again the evidence is contradictory. Obviously while the British part in the Somme offensive remained subsidiary it was hardly relevant to speak of a "British" breakthrough. However when the British contribution was increased Haig spoke of the object of the attack as being not only "to defeat the enemy on the front of attack [but]...such a victory over the enemy's forces as will compel him to retreat and thereby open up possibilities of further tactical and strategical success." In contrast Rawlinson, the army commander who was to carry out the attack, was in favour of only attempting the seizure of the German front line before regrouping for a second attack. Eventually Haig realized that because of the diminution/the French contribution the objectives would probably have to be scaled down and he then spoke of the Montauban Ridge just beyond the German second line as being the objective, further action to be dependent on "developments". However, it is clear that Haig continued to hanker after larger results and he told Rawlinson that he should consider reaching Combles on the German third line on the first day. (Combles fell in October.) Later Haig urged Rawlinson to keep the cavalry close up in case the resistance of the enemy broke and it proved possible to get through into open country; and in a note to Joffre just before the battle Haig identified as the fourth stage of the action a move forward to a line Cambrai-Douai many miles beyond the German positions and not reached until the end of the war. At the same time, however, Haig began to speak of the operation as having the sole object "of relieving the pressure on Verdun" and Robertson could tell the War Committee that "there was no idea of any attempt to breakthrough the German lines, it would be only a move

(1) Blake, editorial notes, p. 152.
(2) Haig to Joffre 10/2/16, W.O. 158/14.
(5) Rawlinson Diary 23/5/16, Rawlinson Papers, 1/5.
(7) Haig to Joffre 26/6/16, W.O. 158/14.
(8) Haig to Robertson 1/6/16, W.O. 158/21 and Haig to Robertson, 10/6/16, W.O. 158/14.
to 'digegur' the French'. Thus once more Haig seems to have followed a complicated course. Originally he had hoped for a decisive breakthrough, and although he modified his objectives later, he still hoped to capture the entire German defensive positions. However, as the weeks went by and the French contribution to the battle dwindled Haig shifted the emphasis in his appreciations from breaking through to relieving pressure on the French. At the same time he never gave up his hope that a decision could be reached. To this extent Churchill is justified in his claim that the Somme was meant to produce a victory and did not form a part of an overall campaign to wear down the German army by attrition. Also if attrition had been Haig's sole aim then surely the battle could have been planned differently. For example an attack on a narrower front would have increased the weight of artillery per yard to the advantage of the British. Then when sections of the enemy's front line were captured they could merely have been held in expectation of the counter-attacks which inevitably would have developed. But far from adopting this policy the British attacked in a manner most likely to cause heavy casualties to their own side and kept on attacking until some of their formations cracked. To a certain extent they were saved by the equally inept German policy, especially noticeable later in the battle, of counter-attacking with no worthwhile objectives in mind. One must conclude therefore that if Churchill is wrong and Haig did only plan to fight a battle of attrition then he did so in most inappropriate way.

Turning to the opening of the battle Churchill laments the lack of surprise caused by the "vast uncamouflaged preparations" and the week long preliminary bombardment. Yet it is hard to see how an attack by over 14 divisions could have been "camouflaged". Throughout the course of the war it was not found possible to disguise the preparations for any major battle.

(1) War Committee Minutes 30/5/16, Cab. 42/14/12.
(2) The 115th. Brigade of the 38th. division "failed to attack" on July 7th. and another Brigade on the night of the 7/8th. The division was withdrawn. Horne to Haig, 13/7/16, and notes by Haig 15/7/16 and Rawlinson 14/7/16, W.O. 158/234.
(3) The World Crisis, p. 1042.
(4) As against the scope and main thrust of an attack. Both these features were disguised by the Germans in their attack of March 21st. 1918.
as distinct from pin-pricks such as Cambrai and Messines. Also, although Churchill does not seem to be aware of it the length of the preliminary bombardment was a matter of great controversy between Haig and Rawlinson. From the first Rawlinson favoured a long bombardment. He thought only by prolonged shelling could he be sure that the German wire was cut. This plan would also prevent the Germans from bringing up food and ammunition and make sleep impossible.\(^1\) He told his Corps commanders "nothing could exist at the conclusion of the bombardment in the area covered by it".\(^2\) Haig proposed a hurricane bombardment of short duration in order to achieve surprise\(^3\) but Rawlinson argued that there was little chance of surprise anyway\(^4\) and after a long struggle he persuaded Haig to change his point of view.\(^5\) Thus Rawlinson must bear the main responsibility for the long opening bombardment but this fact is not mentioned in The World Crisis.

Of the effect of the bombardment Churchill says, "The seven-days' bombardment had by no means accomplished what had been expected. Safely hidden in the deep dugouts, the defenders and their machine guns were practically intact. From these they emerged with deadly effect at the moment of assault or even after the waves of attack had actually passed over and beyond them."\(^6\) It is thus clear that in Churchill's estimation over-confidence in the effect of the bombardment caused the collapse of the initial attack and the high number of casualties suffered on the first day. It is surprising that he is not more critical of Haig and Rawlinson on this point for there is evidence to suggest that the fact that the dugouts had not been destroyed nor the wire cut was obvious before the attack commenced. For example the depth and method of construction of the German dugouts was well known to the British commanders\(^7\) and it should have been possible to calculate that by

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\(^1\) Rawlinson to Haig 19/4/16, 4th. Army War Diary, W.O. 158/321.
\(^2\) Edmonds, 1916 V.1, p. 288.
\(^3\) Haig to Rawlinson 13/4/16, 4th Army War Diary, W.O. 158/321.
\(^4\) Rawlinson to Haig 19/4/16, in Ibid.
\(^5\) Rawlinson Diary 13/5/16, Rawlinson Papers, 1/5.
\(^6\) The World Crisis, p. 1044. Actually this section was written by Edmonds.
\(^7\) e.g. "Information Gained From The Raiding Party On The Night Of The 5th.\(^\)\(^\), 4th. Army Intelligence Summary 8/6/16, W.O. 157/171.
far the larger number of British shells did not have the power to penetrate to those depths. Furthermore, examination of prisoners revealed that "The trenches are very good and the dug-outs are very deep and [the] prisoner has never known a shell to get through into a dug-out". As late as the 29th. of June the Intelligence Summary stated "The dug-outs are still good. The men appear to remain in these dug-outs all the time and are completely sheltered." As for wire cutting, on the 26th. the 8th. Corps reported that their trench raids had been unsuccessful due to uncut wire, the 10th. Corps reported "some" uncut wire on the 29th. and the 3rd. Corps stated the night before the attack that the wire on their front had been damaged but not cut sufficiently. All these signs were ignored by Haig who was able to write on the 30th. "The wire has never been so well cut, nor the Artillery preparation so thorough." Rawlinson also thought that the "wire cutting has been well done", although he did comment that he was not satisfied with the work done on the 8th. Corps front and on the 30th. wrote, "I am not quite satisfied that all the wire has been cut and in places the front trench is not as much knocked about as I should like". Yet although the whole plan hinged on the conditions that nothing could live in the area covered by the bombardment and that the wire would be totally destroyed neither Rawlinson nor Haig made any attempt to investigate further the disturbing Intelligence reports or to modify their attack to avoid areas such as the 8th. Corps front where there were obvious difficulties. They would therefore seem to be even more culpable for the disaster on the first day than is implied by Churchill in The World Crisis.

Of course it is possible that Churchill was not aware of all the facts set down above at the time he wrote his Somme chapter. However he seems

(1) 4th. Army Intelligence Summary 7/6/16, W.O. 157/171.
(2) 4th. Army Intelligence Summary 29/6/16, Ibid.
(3) 4th. Army War Diary 26/6/16, W.O. 158/327.
(4) Ibid., 29/30/6/16.
(5) Ibid., 30/6/16.
(6) Haig Diary 30/6/16, Blake, p. 151.
(7) Rawlinson Diary 30/6/16, Rawlinson Papers 1/5.
(8) Ibid.
particularly anxious to avoid an investigation of the part played by Rawlinson in the battle. In fact a remarkable feature of Churchill's Somme chapter is that Rawlinson's name does not appear at all. A portrait of Rawlinson does appear in The World Crisis but it comes much later in Churchill's account in connection with the Battle of Amiens in 1918. That action was one of Rawlinson's notable successes and he is described by Churchill as "keen, practical, resolute" with a "strongly-marked capacity". Rawlinson undoubtedly deserved some praise for he was one of the few army commanders who showed any flexibility and he had a certain ability to learn from mistakes. Yet the mistakes which he did make on the Somme were not of a minor nature. Nor were they the kind of error that normally escaped the attention of Churchill. But no criticism of Rawlinson appears in The World Crisis. Perhaps this can be put down to the fact that Rawlinson and Churchill became good friends after Churchill became Secretary of State for War in 1919 when they often shared the pursuits of painting and boar hunting.

Churchill's account of the first day's fighting on the Somme, though brief, is generally accurate and is enlivened by eyewitness accounts from troops on both sides. He sums up the days fighting thus, "Nearly 60,000 British soldiers had fallen, killed or wounded, or were prisoners in the hands of the enemy. This was the greatest loss and slaughter sustained in a single day in the whole history of the British Army. Of the infantry who advanced to the attack, nearly half had been overtaken by death, wounds or capture." Although Churchill does not actually use the phrase it is accounts such as this that have given wide currency to the view that the British Commanders were totally insensitive to the losses being suffered by the troops and sent wave after wave of men.

(1) The World Crisis, p. 1337.
(2) Ibid., p. 1337.
(4) The World Crisis, p. 1044-7.
(5) Ibid., p. 1047.
to their doom when the prospects of success were negligible. Enough has already been said in this chapter to indicate that Rawlinson and Haig had many failings. An attempt was also made to show exactly where their responsibilities lay for the heavy casualties suffered on the first day. However, writers such as Churchill often ignore the real difficulties faced by commanders in the First World War in trying to control a battle on the scale of the Somme. For example on the first day when the men left their trenches it was almost impossible for the High Command to establish the course of events on the other side of the front line. In discussing why formations were repeatedly ordered to attack when their predecessors had suffered heavy casualties, Keegan has written, "most important of all was the simple ignorance of what was happening which prevailed almost everywhere on the British side of no man's-land throughout most of the day." ¹ Keegan goes on to give an example of a Colonel who received no news from the front in the first two hours although it was only 1,000 yards away. ² It is quite clear from the 4th. Army War Diary that the compiler had no real grasp of the course of events. ³ Montgomery, the C.O.S. to Rawlinson, later wrote, "Failure of 3 out of the 5 Corps on the 1st July was not fully realized for quite a long time. Hopeful reports kept coming in from Corps and it was very difficult to know which reports were accurate and which were not.... The severity of the losses was not realized for several days." ⁴ Rawlinson himself noted in his diary, "9.20 a.m. The battle has begun well....We captured all the front line trenches easily". ⁵ In fact at this time in excess of 30,000 casualties had been suffered and long sections of the enemy line were untouched. ⁶ It is hard to see how the difficulty in communicating across trench lines could have been overcome. Runners were often killed

(1) Keegan, Face of Battle, p. 256-7.
(2) Ibid., p. 259.
(3) 4th. Army War Diary 1/7/16, W.O. 158/322.
(4) Montgomery to Edmonds 5/11/30, Cab. 45/190.
(5) Rawlinson Diary 1/7/16, Rawlinson Papers 1/5.
before they could return to their own lines. In any case the information they carried was often out of date. Deep telegraph and telephone lines stopped at the front trench and hastily laid cables were vulnerable to shell fire.\(^1\) Radio technology was not sufficiently developed to be used.

To illustrate the fighting on the first day Churchill has chosen to concentrate on a detailed description of the attack of the 8th. Division.\(^2\) This is a device often employed by military historians and it is only necessary to ask if Churchill has chosen a division whose experiences were representative of the fighting on July 1st. In a list of the 16 divisions used on the first day the 8th. suffered the third highest casualties with 5,121 killed, missing and wounded.\(^3\) Only the 29th. (5,240) and the 34th. (6,380) suffered more.\(^4\) However all divisions had heavy casualties on the first day. Only the 46th. Division lost less than 3,000.\(^5\) It cannot be said therefore that the example chosen by Churchill is misleading in this respect.\(^6\)

The responsibility for continuing the battle of the Somme until November was of course Haig's. The necessity to prolong the battle for five months has been a matter of some controversy, commentators such as Terraine holding that this aided Haig's overall strategy of wearing down the German forces, others stating that it was wearing down the British army to a greater degree and obtaining no worthwhile objectives. Churchill is of the latter school but while holding to the view that there were no good strategic reasons for continuing the battle he is prepared to be lenient towards the Commander-in-Chief over this question. Churchill states that the need to keep pressure away from the French and the fact that Haig was

\(^{\text{References}}\):

(2) The *World Crisis*, p. 1044-7.
(3) Middlebrook, *First Day On The Somme*, p. 266.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Churchill also quotes detailed casualty figures for some of the battalions of the 8th. Division on the first day. Figures for these battalions are also quoted by Farrar-Hockley in his book on the Somme. In many cases the two sets of figures differ but the margins are too slight to be significant. See Farrar-Hockley A.H., *The Somme*, London, Pan, 1966, p. 140, *The World Crisis*, p. 1047.
continually fed with false intelligence by his own Intelligence Department concerning relative German-British casualties and the state of enemy morale may have contributed to the Commander-in-Chief's decision.

"Sir Douglas Haig was not at this time well served by his advisers in the Intelligence Department of General Headquarters. The temptation to tell a Chief in a great position the things he most likes to hear is one of the commonest explanations of mistaken policy. An Emperor, a Commander-in-Chief, even a Prime Minister in peace or war, is in the main surrounded by smiling and respectful faces. Most people who come in contact with him in times of strain feel honoured by contact with so much power or in sympathy with the bearer of such heavy burdens. They are often prompted to use smooth processes, to mention some favourable item, to leave unsaid some ugly misgiving or some awkward contradiction."1

This is a very severe indictment of Charteris, who was Haig's chief of intelligence. However, the Churchill Papers reveal that originally Churchill's attack on Charteris was much more personal and direct. In a draft chapter Churchill wrote of Charteris, "Those officers got a smile, a good mark or promotion from their immediate superior, who served up the kind of information and tit bits of news which were welcomed, and those who harped on the disagreeable aspects might very easily be told they had got 'their tails down' or had not got 'their heart in the business'."2

This section was later deleted perhaps to comply with Edmonds' suggestion that such sarcasms were better removed.

To return to Churchill's major point, did the misleading evidence from the Intelligence Department play a part in Haig's decision to continue the campaign? It is understandable that in the early phase of the battle Haig accepted without question the reports of his Intelligence Department and was able to state that "signs of serious demoralization in the ranks of many of the enemy's units have been evident".3 It is harder to explain away Haig's continuing belief in these reports two or three months later which led him to make such statements as "evidence of a growing deterioration in his morale accumulates daily" 4 and "It is not possible to say how near to

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1 The World Crisis, p. 1059-60.
2 Churchill Papers 8/100.
3 Haig to Robertson 8/7/16, W.O. 158/21.
4 Haig to Joffre 11/9/16, W.O. 158/15.
breaking point the enemy may be but he has undoubtedly gone a long way towards it".¹ By this time (October) it would not have been unreasonable for Haig to have viewed with some scepticism the reports of deteriorating German morale from his Intelligence Department. Furthermore there is evidence that Haig meant to continue the attack even if German morale held.

On September 19th, Rawlinson reported "Kig[gell] says D.H. means to go on until we cannot possibly continue further either from the weather or want of troops. I'm not so sure that he is right."² Three weeks later he wrote "[Haig] is bent on continuing the battle until we are forced to stop by the weather indeed he would like to go on all through the winter".³ There is no mention of impending victory of imminent collapse of German morale here and indeed for Haig the battle seemed to have developed a momentum of its own and he appeared determined to continue with it whatever the circumstances. Clearly then not all the blame for the long months of attrition on the Somme can be borne by the Intelligence Department.

What of Churchill's contention that it was necessary to continue the battle for the purpose of keeping pressure off the French at Verdun? This could certainly have been a factor in the British decision to attack on July 1st (although it provided a convenient excuse if the attack failed) and no doubt Verdun played some part in the decision to keep on attacking on the Somme. However the French position soon improved and by July 14th. they felt strong enough to begin preparations for a small counter-attack at Verdun.⁴ Moreover all through September and October they began to build up supplies for a larger movement⁵ and on October 19th. their opening barrage commenced.⁶ Thus October 19th. was the last date on which relief of the French at Verdun should have been a consideration for Haig. Yet the Somme

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¹ Haig to Robertson 7/10/16, W.O. 158/21.
² Ibid., 6/10/16, Rawlinson Papers 1/7.
³ Ibid., p. 508.
⁴ Ibid., p. 308.
⁵ Ibid., p. 311.
battle continued for another month at a cost of 70,000 men. On this basis it is hard to accept that Verdun was of overriding importance to Haig during the latter months of the battle. Furthermore it must not be forgotten that the French participated in the Somme battle at a final cost of almost 200,000 men. If the sole object of the British attack was to relieve the French because of their desperate position, the killing of an additional 200,000 Frenchmen seems a strange way of going about it. Surely if the French had been in such dire straits their part in the battle would have been closed down and the British left to attack alone. The fact that this was not done throws doubt on the whole argument.

Thus concludes our survey of Churchill's chapter on the Somme and his effort seems altogether more satisfactory than the Jutland chapters.\(^1\) In that chapter it was seen that the bias of Churchill's advisers, his own inclinations, and his close involvement with the navy, resulted in a partisan account which ignored many of the realities of the situation with which Jellicoe was faced. In the Somme chapter, Churchill's chief adviser was Edmonds. Now Edmonds was not an impartial critic and his tendency to view favourably most actions of the British High Command was well known. On this occasion however, he may, at times, have been able to offset Churchill's equally well known antipathy to the British Generals. Thus the fact that Churchill, while generally critical of the British strategy, did attempt to seek explanations for the reasons which led to the attack, and why it was thought appropriate to prolong it, may be explained by Edmonds' influence. Nevertheless, although Churchill's chapter contains these elements of balance he has not always succeeded in providing convincing explanations for some of the complex questions raised by the battle and in common with much other writing about the Somme, the reader is left with no real grasp of the difficulties which faced commanders of large scale attacks on the Western Front. The most serious criticism that can be offered about

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\(^1\) The casualty statistics question in relation to the Somme is discussed below.
Churchill's chapter is the non appearance of Rawlinson. Also it is
difficult to establish from Churchill's narrative exactly where the
responsibility of Rawlinson and Haig lies, especially for the fiasco on the
first day. Nevertheless Churchill has made a promising start to the task
of describing the later land battles of the war and it now remains to be
seen whether this standard is maintained in his final chapters. First
however, Churchill's handling of an important topic, interrelated to the
battle of the Somme, that of casualty statistics, must be discussed.

Churchill and The Casualty Statistics Controversy

The question of relative German and Allied casualty statistics first
aroused Churchill's interest during the battle of the Somme. While that
battle was in progress Churchill became convinced that contrary to
published reports, the British were suffering much more than the Germans.
In The World Crisis he claims that by "applying my knowledge and judgement
to all the information I could acquire, I formed my own opinion upon the
reports with which I was told the Cabinet were being furnished."¹ In an
earlier draft of The World Crisis Churchill was more frank about how he had
arrived at this opinion. "I heard a good deal of what was going on
confidentially from my friends in the army, in the War Office and in the
Cabinet."² Whatever Churchill's source of information the result was a
memorandum on the Somme dated August 1st. It was passed on to the Cabinet
by F.E. Smith. The main thrust of Churchill's paper was that the British
casualties at that time were 2½ times greater than the German.³ The
validity of that contention will be examined in due course. It only needs
to be noted now that the vindication of this memorandum was one of the main
impulses behind Churchill's decision to include a chapter on the Somme in

¹ Originally Churchill had "misleading" reports here. See Churchill
Papers 8/100 and The World Crisis, p. 1053-4.
² Churchill Papers 8/100.
³ The World Crisis, p. 1056.
The World Crisis. However, as early as 1921, when he was still working on Volumes I and II, Churchill's interest in this question was apparent. At this time he asked the Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, to make enquiries at Berlin on the availability of German casualty statistics. Curzon was informed by Lord D'Abernon, the British Ambassador, that work had been done in this field by a Lt. Hume, who was attached to the British Embassy in Berlin. Two sets of casualty statistics were provided for Churchill, the German based on the returns of the Reichsarchiv and the British on a forthcoming War Office publication, "Statistical Abstract of the Military Effort of the British Empire".

No more work on the subject seems to have been done by Churchill until late 1923 when he had definitely decided to add a third volume to The World Crisis. He apparently requested more detailed information from Berlin and when the figures arrived he informed Edmonds, "They absolutely confirm the argument [that the British and the French had suffered higher casualties than the Germans] but with the most surprising features. I have in consequence recast the first three chapters [of volume three] with a new chapter full of graphics? called "The Blood Test". As Churchill's volume neared publication Edmonds warned Churchill that the German figures did not include the lightly wounded. Apparently he supplied Churchill with figures from the German VII Army Corps to prove his point. Churchill immediately recognized the fundamental weakness in Edmonds' argument. He pointed out to Edmonds that if the figures for the VII Army Corps were representative then 40% would have to be added to the total German wounded (while the total German dead remained the same). If this were done it would destroy the ratio of one killed to two wounded which Churchill on the basis of his present

(1) D'Abernon to Curzon 26/7/21, Churchill Papers 8/188. It is possible that it was Churchill's enquiry which stimulated Hume to work on this subject.
(2) Lt. Hume to D'Abernon 19/7/21, in Ibid.
(4) Edmonds to Churchill 14/10/26, Ibid. 8/188.
(5) Churchill to Edmonds 15/10/26, Ibid. 8/203.
statistics considered common for all three major armies in the West.\(^1\) Churchill had hit on a very important point here for logic would dictate that over four years of war between armies similarly equipped the ratio of killed to wounded should be similar. Unfortunately the only comparative British and German figures for killed and wounded that now exist contain such a large number of undistributed "missing" that no accurate comparisons can be made.\(^2\) In the figures supplied to Churchill this category had been distributed between wounded and killed although the result of this allocation no longer exists. However in the absence of any indications that the distribution of the German casualties should differ from the French and British it seems likely that these final figures would confirm Churchill's assertion. Churchill did not receive any answer of this point from Edmonds who could apparently offer no explanation.

Nevertheless Churchill thought Edmonds criticisms worthy of further investigation and he wrote to Hume, who was still in Berlin, to have the point re-examined.\(^3\) Hume promised to obtain an authoritative answer from the Germans but proffered his own opinion that the lightly wounded had been included.\(^4\) While this investigation was underway Churchill received a letter from the War Office assuring him that the German figures did not include the lightly wounded.\(^5\) Edmonds also returned to the attack telling Churchill, "It was...notorious that the Germans did not include 'lightly wounded'... in the casualties".\(^6\) He added, however, that as this fact was so well known, "I have never troubled to collect any statements on the subject."\(^7\) Despite Edmonds lack of evidence these criticisms clearly worried Churchill. His whole chapter depended on the reliability of the figures. He therefore

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\(^1\) Churchill to Edmonds 15/10/26, Churchill Papers 8/203.

\(^2\) Using the figures published in the Military Effort the respective British and German ratios are 1 killed to 4.5 wounded and 1:3.9. If 8/10ths. of the missing are added to the killed the ratios are 1:2.8 and 1:1.75. However the German "missing" constitute 25% of their total casualties while the British figure is only 11% and this makes any similar distribution to both sides extremely unlikely. Clearly a higher proportion of the German missing has to be added to their killed category than British missing to their killed and this would tend to even up the killed to wounded ratios.

\(^3\) Churchill to Hume 21/10/26, Ibid.

\(^4\) Hume to Churchill 9/11/26, Ibid., 8/204.

\(^5\) H.J. Creedy (W.O.) to Churchill 9/11/26, Ibid.

\(^6\) Edmonds to Churchill 18/11/26, Ibid.

\(^7\) Ibid.
wrote again to Hume emphasizing the importance of the German researches, "I am founding a considerable argument on these figures which in their present form bear out all I thought and wrote at the time in Official memoranda about what was taking place at the front. I am extremely anxious to be on the right side in all these calculations and to make assurance doubly sure." ¹ He went on to summarize the Historical Section's case against the figures,

1. They did not include the lightly wounded.
2. The Germans habitually underestimated their dead and missing.
3. In consequence of the above 2 million should be added to the German figures supplied by the Reichsarchiv.

He then continued, "You must understand that this attitude on the part of the Historical Section arises from their desire to prevent me in any way from being led into a mistake, and I am extremely grateful to them for all the trouble they have taken. Nevertheless I cannot accept any of this reasoning. I do not think it is confirmed either by comparison of the average proportions of dead to wounded or by comparison with the French whose Army was organized and administered on very similar lines to the German." ² 

Hume replied a few days later enclosing a letter from Herr Stinger from the Reichsarchiv. ³ In that letter Stinger emphatically denied that the lightly wounded had been excluded from the figures and he also claimed that the sick and wounded who died later were also reallocated to killed. ⁴ This reply satisfied Churchill that his basic figures were correct. He now asked Hume to have his final calculations verified by Stinger. Churchill's calculations were: that the Germans had suffered a total number of casualties on the Western Front of 4,794,000. To these should be added 400,000 casualties reported to the Zentral Nachweiseampt (Central Information Bureau)

(1) Churchill to Hume 12/11/26, Churchill Papers 8/204.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Hume to Churchill 19/11/26, in Ibid.
(4) Stinger to Hume 18/11/26, in Ibid.
after the war and 150,000 suffered in front of the Americans. This gave a total of 5,344,000 which deducted from the Nechweiseampt war total of 7,079,000 gave 1,735,000 for all other fronts or a ratio of 3 to 1. In reply Hume informed Churchill that Stinger regarded the "American" figure as only very approximate but that he regarded the other figures mentioned as very logical and as good as any likely to be obtained. These figures, with minor changes, are used in The World Crisis.

Clearly Churchill went to a great deal of trouble to establish the reliability of his figures. How does he use them to "prove" his case? Churchill draws two main conclusions from his tables of casualty statistics.

(1) "During the whole war the Germans never lost in any phase of the fighting more than the French whom they fought, and frequently inflicted double casualties upon them." He therefore concludes that the great battles of attrition on the Western Front left the British and French weaker in relation to the Germans than before they commenced. He also claims that the Germans did not lose in these battles enough men to balance their annual intake and under the prevailing conditions they would have had sufficient men to last indefinitely.

However, in 1918, so Churchill argues, the Germans made a fundamental mistake. They launched their great attack in the West, which for the first time reversed the ratio of losses. Nor could the German losses be replaced in the remaining months of 1918. In combination with the blockade and the exertions of four years of war this caused the German collapse. Thus

(1) Churchill to Hume, 23/11/26, Churchill Papers 8/204.
(2) Hume to Churchill 27/11/26 in Ibid.
(3) See tables A and B on p. 933-34. Churchill's published totals are 4,846,000, 397,000 casualties reported after the war, 140,000 inflicted by the Americans, Grand Total 5,383,000. Total for the war 7,080,000. 1,697,000 suffered on other fronts.
(4) The World Crisis, p. 935.
(5) Ibid., p. 936. That is of 1915, 1916 and 1917. Churchill continually ignores the 1918 British offensive in which the losses of the two sides were approximately equal.
(6) Ibid., p. 936-7.
(7) Ibid., p. 938.
Germany was worn down "not by Joffre, Nivelle and Haig, but by Ludendorff".  

It is not surprising that many historians and apologists for the General Staff have rejected these arguments, for Churchill is claiming that the great allied offensives from 1916, although prodigious in their slaughter, were totally futile in their results. Invariably the method chosen by Churchill's critics to attack his arguments has been to query the validity of his statistics. The case against Churchill made by his major critics will now be examined.

It has already been noticed that Sir John Edmonds did not accept Churchill's German figures as accurate. He continued this scepticism into his volumes of the Official History, concluding that 30% had to be added to all German totals to include the lightly wounded.  

It was also noted however that in correspondence with Churchill Edmonds did not produce any evidence with which to back up this assumption merely stating that the fact that the lightly wounded were not included was "notorious". Eventually as justification for his thesis Edmonds pointed to a quotation in the German Official History (VXII) which said that "the great losses of the summer of 1916, since the beginning of the year without the wounded whose recovery was to be expected within a reasonable time amounted to a round figure of 1,400,000, of whom 800,000 were between July and October." This would seem to indicate that the Germans indeed did not include their lightly wounded. However it has been demonstrated by M.J. Williams that this passage actually read,"The great losses of the summer of 1916 had made considerably more difficult the reinforcement supply of the Field Army. They amounted since the beginning of the year, without the wounded whose recovery was to be expected within a reasonable time...etc." As Williams comments the passage used by Edmonds "occurs in the context of a general discussion of the German rein-

(1) The World Crisis, p. 939.
(2) Edmonds, 1916, V.1, p. 496-7.
forcement position in 1916...Here it would be natural to ignore lightly wounded who would soon rejoin their units and would not need to be replaced...Clearly this passage does not constitute a general admission that lightly wounded were omitted from the returns of specific battle losses in Der Weltkreig."¹ In an earlier article Williams attacked the very basis of Edmonds 30% addition.² He noted that Edmonds case contained a major flaw which arose from the incorrect labelling of certain figures as "net" or "gross" of the lightly wounded. Edmonds claimed that two different sets of figures were available, those from the Reichsarchiv compiled from unit returns being "net" and those from the Nachweiseampt being "gross". For any particular battle therefore a comparison between the two figures would yield the percentage of lightly wounded. For Verdun, Edmonds selects Churchill's total German casualty figure of 426,519 and compares it with a figure of 336,831 calculated by a German military historian, Wendt. Defining these figures as "gross" and "net" respectively Edmonds calculated that the understatement in the German figures was 33%. However as Williams has pointed out, Churchill's figure, as stated clearly in The World Crisis,³ is based on the Reichsarchiv statistics and therefore according to Edmonds own claim should be "net". Wendt's figures were based mainly on the actual unit returns and would therefore have the same base as Churchill's. In fact, the difference between the two sets of figures are attributable to differences in time period and to the fact that Wendt's relate to Verdun only and Churchill's to the Western Front as a whole. Therefore the basis of Edmonds' calculations is entirely falacious.⁴ There is a further flaw in Edmonds' calculations. It has already been shown that he regarded the figures obtained by Churchill from Germany as

(1) Williams M.J., "Treatment of the German Losses on the Somme in the British Official History:..." , p. 70.
(3) The World Crisis, p. 932-4.
(4) Edmonds goes through similar arithmetical and mental gymnastics to arrive at a figure of 27% to be added to the Somme figures. See Williams, "Treatment of German Losses..."
exclusive of the lightly wounded and indeed treated them as such in his additions. Yet in comparing Churchill's figures with Wendt's he regarded the former as gross figures which included the lightly wounded. Thus Edmonds proceeds to add the 30% to figures which by his own calculations already include this addition. It is clear that his whole argument is spurious and on the bases he uses nothing should be added to Churchill's German figures. (It should be noted at this point that Edmonds uses similar sleight of hand on the British figures. Thus for the Somme he lists the British losses as 419,654.¹ This is of course a Somme only figure and should not be compared (as Edmonds does) with a German figure which represents losses on the Western Front as a whole.)

A further critic is Sir Charles Oman, who in a contribution to a volume "The World Crisis: A Criticism", questioned the reliability of Churchill's figures for the Somme.² Oman was employed on casualty statistic calculations during the war and he claims that by adding up the German losses as published in their official Verlustliste he arrives at a figure of 420,000 for the period July-late October.³ He then adds 60,000 for the period late-October-November not covered by the Verlustliste and another 50,000 for the ancillary units (artillery, engineers etc.) to arrive at a total of 530,000. This total is then compared with Oman's British and French figures for the Somme only of 489,334⁴ to obtain a result that brings the allies out on the right side. However, Oman has not compared like with like. Once more it is Williams who has pointed out his error. Williams states that "Sir Charles assumed that all the published losses for units that had been engaged on the Somme had been suffered there,"⁵ This was clearly not the case as the lists were often four or

¹ Edmonds, 1916 V.1, p. 497.
³ Ibid., p. 51.
⁴ Ibid., p. 52-3.
⁵ Williams, Treatment of German Losses on the Somme, p. 70.
five weeks old and in the meantime the German units had often been engaged elsewhere on the Western Front. Thus Sir Charles is comparing a Western Front figure for German with a Somme only figure for Britain and France. Furthermore he does nothing to question the validity of Churchill's German figures as these came from the Reichsarchiv and were compiled from the Verlustlisten.

Churchill's German figures have also come under attack from John Terraine. Williams noted that in his biography of Haig, Terraine states that students will find "close and detailed analysis" of German losses in the Official History and accepts the basis of the analysis, namely, the percentage addition for lightly wounded. After the work of Williams this position is clearly untenable and in a later book Terraine says, "My own feeling is that the addition of a flat 30% at all times is very arbitrary, that it makes no allowance for the endless possibilities of variation in circumstance. On the other hand, it is clear that the German figures are not exact; they always require further calculation before acceptance, and what this amounts to, basically, is adding something. But what? The answer, I suspect, is a variable: sometimes, perhaps Edmonds's 30%; sometimes nearer 25%, or 20%; I should be surprised if it was ever as low as 15%." Terraine then proceeds to select the example of Passchendaele and adds 20% to a figure quoted in the Official German account (260,000) to arrive at 312,000 which he claims is approximately equal to the combined British and French losses. Several points should be noted here. The first is that Williams did not query the actual percentage figure derived by Edmonds but destroyed the entire basis for adding anything at all. Furthermore, although Terraine claims that the German figures are not exact he does not put forward any evidence to explain why they should be any less exact than the British. As he then suggests that 20-25% should be added on to the

(1) Williams, Thirty Per Cent, p. 51. See also Terraine, Haig, p. 231.
(3) Ibid.
German figure it can be only assumed that despite William's articles Terraine still accepts Edmonds' basic contention. Moreover it seems very convenient that Terraine's chosen figure of 20% enables the casualty figures at the two sides for Passchendaele to balance. In conclusion it must be said that Terraine has produced no new evidence for questioning the reliability of the German figures as used by Churchill.

Terraine has also called into question the validity of Churchill's British casualty statistics. In his book on Passchendaele already quoted he has pointed out that the source used by Churchill, "Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire" contains not one set of casualty figures for Passchendaele but three. This is also true of other battles and the various lists in the "Military Effort" will now be compared to see if any discrepancies arise. Churchill's figures are taken from "Approximate Casualties by Months in the Expeditionary Force, France", on p. 263-5 and appear in the first column below. The other figures come from a table of comparative British and German casualties on the British Sector of the Western Front, also taken from the Military Effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Military Effort Figures as used by Churchill</th>
<th>Military Effort Section 7 Figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug '14-Jan '15</td>
<td>102,196</td>
<td>102,196 (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb-Mar '15</td>
<td>33,678</td>
<td>30,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr-May '15</td>
<td>96,994</td>
<td>92,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June-July '15</td>
<td>38,878</td>
<td>36,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug-Oct '15</td>
<td>100,111</td>
<td>94,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov-Dec '15</td>
<td>20,380</td>
<td>17,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan-Feb '16</td>
<td>23,989</td>
<td>21,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar-June '16</td>
<td>105,978</td>
<td>97,332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Terraine John, The Road to Passchendaele, p. 344.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Casualties of British</th>
<th>Casualties of German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July-Aug '16</td>
<td>271,330</td>
<td>257,642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept-Oct '16</td>
<td>181,908</td>
<td>170,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov-Dec '16</td>
<td>60,041</td>
<td>54,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan-Apr '17</td>
<td>187,277</td>
<td>170,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-June '17</td>
<td>151,163</td>
<td>140,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-Sept '17</td>
<td>247,024</td>
<td>230,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct-Dec '17</td>
<td>230,316</td>
<td>217,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan-Mar 20 '18</td>
<td>22,851 (b)</td>
<td>19,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 March-30 Apr</td>
<td>316,889 (c)</td>
<td>302,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-July '18</td>
<td>134,047</td>
<td>125,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug '18</td>
<td>122,272</td>
<td>122,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept '18</td>
<td>114,831</td>
<td>114,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct '18</td>
<td>121,046</td>
<td>121,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,685,209</td>
<td>2,540,768</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) No separate figure available
(b) Jan-Feb Figure
(c) March-Apr Figure

It is noticeable that the two columns vary throughout the whole period with the exception of the first and the last three pairs of figures - a coincidence which would suggest a common source. It is also noticeable that Churchill has chosen the higher set of figures. However this makes little difference to his case. The overall difference between the columns is 6.5%, for the periods of the Somme 5.9%, and neither percentage is high enough to make the allied casualties higher than the German.

There is another set of figures in the Military Effort. These cover selected periods only and begin on July 1st, 1916.

(1) Source of Table - 1st. Column "Approximate Casualties by Month in the Expeditionary Force, France", Military Effort, p. 263-5; 2nd Column, "Comparative Figures of British-German Casualties on the British Sector of the Western Front During the Period February 1915 to October 1918" Military Effort, p. 359-62.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Churchill's Figure</th>
<th>Military Effort Table XIII-XV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July-Nov '16</td>
<td>499,476</td>
<td>474,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Apr-6 June '17</td>
<td>196,110 (a)</td>
<td>178,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June-30 Jly '17</td>
<td>159,818</td>
<td>103,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Jly-30 Dec '17</td>
<td>394,645 /</td>
<td>380,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Mar-14 Nov '18</td>
<td>830,010 (b)</td>
<td>755,665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,080,059</td>
<td>1,892,562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) April-May figures  
(b) March-November figures

As noted in the table, time periods dealt with in the two columns are not quite identical and some of the variation in the statistics was undoubtedly caused by this factor. For example, the wide discrepancy between Churchill's figure for June and July 1917 and the figure given in the Military Effort for 7th. June - 30th. July 1917, can largely be explained by the fact that the casualties for the first day of 3rd. Ypres which commenced on the 31st. July are not included in the lower total. Because of the differing time periods it is therefore difficult to compare the two sets of figures. But the fact that the total given in the Military Effort is 10% lower than the figures used by Churchill does nothing to invalidate his overall case that the allies suffered more casualties than the Germans on the Western Front. For even if the lower total is used the balance is still in Germany's favour.

Yet a fourth set of figures in the Military Effort deals with the battles of Arras, Messines and 3rd. Ypres. However the time periods (9th. April-16th. May, 7th. June-13th. June, and 31st. July-5th. October 1917) are not easily comparable with Churchill's figures except in the case of 3rd. Ypres. For this battle Churchill's figures for August and September 1917,

(1) Source of Table, 1st. Column, as in previous table; 2nd Column, Military Effort, Tables XIII-XV, p. 325-328.
(2) Military Effort Table XVIII, p. 334.
roughly corresponds with the time period given here and his figure of 162,329 compares closely with that of 162,769 given in this fourth set.

Thus although Terraine deserves credit for pointing out the variations in the Military Effort and has provided a useful warning that no set of figures can be regarded as absolute, the variations do not prove on inspection to be wide enough to alter Churchill's contention that overall German casualties were less than those of the allies.

In fact British casualty figures can be checked against two other sources, medical statistics and the casualty returns in the Annual Reports of the British Army. For the medical statistics only yearly totals for France and Flanders exist and it is therefore only possible to compare them with Churchill's yearly figures. However it can be seen that the overall variation is very small indeed (0.6%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Churchill's Figures</th>
<th>Medical Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>102,196</td>
<td>98,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>278,924</td>
<td>313,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>654,363</td>
<td>651,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>817,790</td>
<td>75,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>852,861</td>
<td>876,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,706,134</td>
<td>2,690,054</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once again Churchill's figure for 1917 is significantly higher (9%) but once again this is not high enough to alter the balance.

A final check on the British figures is provided by the "General Annual Report of the British Army" for 1914-18. This is a highly regarded source as the figures were checked against the official regimental lists of casualties and has been called by one authority "the most detailed and accurate".

Source of Table, Column 1, as for previous tables; Column 2, Mitchell, Major T.J. and G.M. Smith, Casualties and Medical Statistics of the Great War. Official Medical History of the War, London, H.M.S.O., 1931, Table 4, p. 122 and p. 136, Table 3, p. 149, 158, 168.
accurate record of British military participation in the 1914-18 war" and "the most reliable treatment of British war casualties". Unfortunately for our purposes the Reports contain details of the British Army only while Churchill's figures contain Dominion and Indian casualties. However, separate "Imperial" figures are available and as the overwhelming number of casualties were suffered by the British Army a further useful check can be obtained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Casualties-Western Front</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>2,271,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>210,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>173,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>46,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>24,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>14,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,741,189</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Churchill's total is 2,758,000 and once more only a slight variation in the two sets of figures can be noticed. Thus an exhaustive check on British and German casualty statistics reveals that Churchill has used figures that are as reliable as any available.

Of course Churchill's overall argument that the Germans suffered less than the British and French could still be invalidated if Churchill's French statistics proved to be substantially inaccurate. Unfortunately I have been able to discover little about Churchill's French figures. They derive from the official returns presented to the Chamber of Deputies in 1922. The apparent lack of controversy over them could indicate that they are accepted as

(3) The World Crisis, Table A Note 3, p. 933.
accurate or that no other figures are available or that the source of the figures has been destroyed. There is one independent check that can be made however, which tends to confirm the accuracy of Churchill's French statistics. Churchill says that during the period, July-October 1916 the French suffered 338,011 casualties on the Western Front.¹ For the same period the French Ministry of War, as quoted by Edmonds, stated that 204,253 casualties were suffered by the French on the Somme alone.² This means that on the remainder of the Western Front the French suffered 134,000 casualties for July-October. Now Wendt, a German historian, has calculated that for this period the Germans suffered 141,863 casualties on sectors of the Western Front other than the Somme.³ As approximately 34,000 of these casualties were suffered in front of the British⁴ the remaining German casualties against the French alone of about 100,000 would seem compatible with French losses of 134,000. Thus Churchill's French statistics appear to be reasonable for the Somme at least. In any case it would be necessary for Churchill's French statistics to be incorrect by a factor of about 100% for the balance of casualties to be altered in the favour of the allies. As reported by Churchill the French suffered 4,974,000 casualties on the Western Front. But the difference between the German and British totals is 2,625,000. (German total 5,383,000, British total 2,758,000.) Thus for the balance to come out on the side of Edmonds, Terraine and Oman the French figure would have to be reduced by some 2,300,000, and it is extremely unlikely that Churchill's French figures were as inaccurate as that. (While discussing the totals for the three armies, it is a convenient point to note that Edmonds' 30% are not high enough to produce the balance he evidently desired. 58% would have to be added to Churchill's figures to produce a balance favourable to the allies.)

¹ The World Crisis, p. 934.
³ Williams, Thirty Percent, p. 54.
⁴ Derived by deducting Edmonds' Somme only figure from Churchill's Western Front figures.
Can Churchill's figures be criticized in any other way? It should be noted that his statistics do not relate to particular battles but include the Western Front as a whole. Churchill suggests that to obtain casualty figures specific to any one battle 1/8th. should be deducted from these figures to account for losses on the quiet sectors of the front. However, the discussion of the French and German figures for the Somme for July-October revealed that approximately 2/5 and 1/4 respectively of the casualties were suffered on "quiet fronts". For the British the figure would be about 1/10.  

Clearly the ratio varies greatly for each army. In the case of the Somme to arrive at the casualties suffered in that battle only 140,000 has to be deducted from Churchill's German figures (the casualties suffered on quiet fronts) and 175,000 from his figure for the French and British. These deductions hardly invalidate his case however, for they still leave 600,000 allied casualties against 400,000 German. Churchill's figures are obviously less reliable for any particular battle than for the war as a whole but it should be remembered that if the Germans did suffer more losses than the allies in a specific battle this would tilt the statistics for the remaining actions even more heavily in the German's favour.

Thus when all factors are taken into account Churchill's figures seem to prove his contention that the allies always lost more men in their offensives than the German defenders. (The 1918 British offensive is conveniently ignored by Churchill and does not fit his argument. The casualty ratios during the British advance (Aug-Nov.) were practically equal.  

Nevertheless this does not invalidate his larger argument for the war as a whole.)

What of Churchill's second contention that it was the German spring offensive in 1918 that finally wore down their armies? Certainly in 1918 the Germans lost more casualties than they inflicted upon the British but the

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(1) The approximate difference between Churchill's Western Front figure for July-October 1916 and Edmonds' Somme only figure for the same period.

(2) Military Effort, p. 362.
difference was never great and the most unfavourable period for the Germans was from 21st. March-30th. April when they lost 3.5 casualties for every 3 inflicted on the British. ¹ Churchill however, assumes that the German losses were never made up and that the German armies suffered a severe manpower shortage in relation to the allies. What additions were made to the German army in 1918 is not known but it should be noted that combatant strengths at the end of the war reveal that the Germans still had a total of 2,900,000 men in the front line in the west. ² The combined British and French total was 2,750,000 and the American 1,175,000. ³ Thus the allied preponderence was no more than 4:3. ⁴ Moreover the major German defeats had been inflicted by the British and French before the American numbers could exert their full effect and the British and French hardly had any superiority at all. Thus numbers alone would not seem to explain the German collapse and this is the weak point in Churchill's argument. In fact a "blood test" is a very crude way of comparing the ability of modern states to wage war. Troops in the line are only one facet of a state's war-making capacity. Thus although Churchill could well be correct in claiming that the allies suffered for the war as a whole more casualties than the Germans it is still possible that the German was being worn down at a faster rate. For example "attrition" seems to have been at work on the transportation system of Germany. Because so much German production was devoted to munitions other machinery such as railway equipment suffered. The production of railway machinery declined by approximately 100% between 1914 and 1918. ⁵ This meant, for example, that by the end of the war coal could not be transported to where it was needed and many blast-furnaces were idle as a result. ⁶ In general,

(1) Military Effort, p. 362.
(2) Ibid., p. 628.
(3) Ibid.
(4) British losses were made up. See Military Effort, "Estimated Strengths of the Expeditionary Force (Including Units which have Commenced to Embark) By Months Since December 1914 - France", Table facing p. 64.
(6) Ibid., p. 57-8.
industrial production declined by \( \frac{1}{4} \) during the course of the war.\(^1\) Food production was also affected by military requirements. There was a shortfall of labourers, horses, fodder, agricultural machinery and the fuel to run it.\(^2\) Due to conscription for the army the civilian labour force declined by 4,000,000 during the war.\(^3\) Taken together with the shortages of raw materials the result was the "consumer goods" production did not exceed 50-60% of the pre-war levels.\(^4\) Germany's financial capacity to carry on the war was also undergoing a process of attrition. But 1918 three quarters of her gold reserves and almost all holdings of foreign securities had gone.\(^5\) Almost all of these factors can be related to the impingement of the army on the economy. In other words the crucial factor may have been that the German economy could not bear the strain placed upon it by the maintainance of an army of 8 million men and their accompanying equipment for four years. Britain and France, with greater financial resources and a wider economic base may have been in a better position to endure longer. In Germany's case economic collapse and military collapse could be interrelated. The question of why the war was won (or lost) is then a good deal more complicated than the tables of figures produced by Churchill would indicate.

Nevertheless of the four authorities mentioned Churchill has handled his material with the greatest perspicacity and was scrupulous in his attempts to check its validity. The need to prove a case eventually led Edmonds, Oman and Terraine into error. In this instance it is the amateur historian who has demonstrated the superior analytical ability.

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(1) Grebler and Winkler, *The Cost of the World War*, p. 27.
(4) Ibid., p. 27.
(5) Ibid.
The Invention of the Tank and Tank Policy 1914-18

Invention

Long before 1914 machines similar in conception and design to the tanks used in the First World War had appeared in fictional accounts of warfare, or had been predicted by various inventors. Their actual development, however, was dependent on the stimulus of war. It was the difficulty of rapid movement brought about by trench warfare on the Western Front that lay behind the evolution of the first tanks. Early attempts to adopt mechanical traction to the prevailing war conditions have very little in common with the tank as it was finally developed, but as they are well established in the mythology with which the invention of the tank is surrounded, several of the most important experiments should be briefly examined.

One of the earliest developments arose out of the activities of the Royal Naval Air Service around Dunkirk. To protect the aerodromes from incursions by German cavalry formations, patrols of motor vehicles fitted with amour plate were developed. This experiment was countered by the Germans who adopted the simple expedient of digging ditches across the major roads. In November 1914 Admiral Bacon of the Coventry Ordnance Works suggested to Churchill that this problem could be overcome by the use of an armoured tractor which would lay a series of girders across the gaps in the roads. This proposal was submitted to Kitchener who gave the order to prepare a tractor for trial. Bacon intended to carry out the trial in mid-February but was posted to France in the meantime and the experiment lapsed. However, the machine prepared for trial was a wheeled armoured

(1) History of the Ministry of Munitions, London, Ministry of Munitions, 1921, vol. 10, Supply of Munitions - part 3 - tanks, p. 5,6 (Hereafter Ministry of Munitions, Tanks)
(2) Ibid., p. 6.
(3) Ibid.
(4) General Scott Moncrieff, Director of Fortifications and Works to Director of Armaments (War Office) 12/11/15, Mun 5/211/1940/13.
(5) Bacon to the W.O. 2/2/15, in Ibid.
(6) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 7.
(7) Ibid., p. 6. See also Swinton Sir Ernest P., Eyewitness: being personal reminiscences of certain phases of the great war, including the genesis of the tank, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1932, p. 102.
tractor and its only purpose was to bridge gaps in the road. Obviously this device bore only a remote resemblance to the tank and little was lost by its cancellation.

Meanwhile a more promising idea had been put forward by Lt.-Col. Swinton, the official war correspondent (Eye-witness) attached to GHQ in France. In October 1914 Swinton arranged a meeting with Hankey, and told him that he had seen Holt Caterpillar tractors at work in France hauling artillery and it had occurred to him that some of these could be modified into fighting machines. ¹ On the 2nd. of January 1915 Swinton passed on his idea for a "machine gun destroyer" to the War Office. ² His basic idea for a modified Holt Caterpillar with a top speed of 4 miles per hour, designed to carry 10 men, 2 machine guns and one light quick firing gun. ³ They were to be specifically adapted to enfilade enemy trenches with machine gun fire while the crew was protected by the armour. It was thought that the caterpillar tracks would be able to crush the enemy wire. ⁴ Under the stimulus of Swinton's concept Hankey had also taken up the idea of a "trench-crossing" device. His plan was for a caterpillar to be fitted with heavy-rollers in order to crush the barbed-wire by sheer weight. Such machines would give some protection to the advancing infantry and could be fitted with machine guns to support the advance. ⁵ This paper was read by Churchill who, in a letter to Asquith, strongly supported Hankey's ideas. He thought

"It would be quite easy in a short time to fit up a number of steam tractors with small armoured shelters, in which men and machine guns could be placed, which would be bullet-proof. Used at night they would not be affected by artillery fire to any extent. The caterpillar system would enable trenches to be crossed quite easily, and the weight of the machine would destroy all wire entanglements. 40 or 50 of these engines prepared secretly and brought into positions at nightfall could

(1) Swinton, Eyewitness, p. 81.
(2) Ibid., p. 94.
(4) Ibid.
advance quite certainly into the enemy's trenches, smashing away all the obstructions and sweeping the trenches with their machine-gun fire and with grenades thrown out of the top. They would then make so many points d'appui for the British supporting infantry to rush forward and rally on them.\(^1\)

It should be noted that both Hankey's and Churchill's proposals differed significantly from Swinton's. Hankey had merely proposed a form of armoured steam roller; Churchill's machine was meant to carry substantial numbers of infantry, intended for use at night, and was clearly not designed to capture more than one line of enemy trenches at a time.

With Swinton's, Hankey's and Churchill's proposals before them the War Office acted. Scott-Moncrieff (Director of Fortifications and Works) thought Swinton's suggestion well worth trying and asked permission to form a committee to investigate his 'machine gun destroyer'.\(^2\) This trial took place on February 17th. The Holt Caterpillar climbed the wire entanglements but fell into a trench and the slippery ground prevented it from getting out.\(^3\) Obviously a new design would have to be developed but when Scott-Moncrieff wrote to Holden at the Ordnance department asking if they could name a competent designer, they replied they could not\(^4\) and there the matter was allowed to drop. The War Office have often been described as obscuranist for allowing this promising development to lapse so easily and it is certainly true that the officials involved showed little persistence or imagination. However the trials had demonstrated one of the fundamental drawbacks of the early tank, the difficulty which the machines had in operating over wet and boggy ground. Now this virtually precluded their use in winter on the Western Front and made their utilization on the low-lying ground of Flanders doubtful at any time of the year. Thus the immediate utility of the weapon must have been placed in doubt and it is

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\(^1\) Churchill to Asquith 5/1/15, C.V.3, p. 377-8.
\(^2\) Scott-Moncrieff to Von Donop 5/1/15, Mun 5/211/1940/13.
\(^3\) Col. Holden to Director of Armaments 18/2/15, in Ibid.
\(^4\) Scott-Moncrieff to the V.D.M.G.O. 26/2/15; Scott-Moncrieff to Holden 1/3/15; Holden to Scott-Moncrieff 1/3/15, in Ibid.
possibly this reason rather than a resistance to new ideas which led to the demise of the project.

Meanwhile, interest in a trench crossing machine had revived at the Admiralty. In January Churchill wrote to Sueter (Director, Air Division RNAS) asking him to investigate the possibility of crushing trenches with two steam-rollers tied together.\(^1\) Experiments showed, however, that the rollers bogged too easily and investigations were halted.\(^2\) In February a proposal for a "land battleship" was put to Churchill by Major Hetherington of the R.N.A.S.\(^3\) Hetherington envisaged a huge platform mounted on 40 foot wheels carrying two four inch guns and powered by an 800 h.p. engine.\(^4\) Churchill passed this proposal onto Fisher who in turn consulted Tennyson d'Eyncourt, the Director of Naval Construction.\(^5\) D'Eyncourt considered the proposition unworkable. The machine would weigh over 1,000 tons and be a conspicuous target for enemy artillery. He thought, however, that the idea was interesting and suggested investigations be made into smaller alternatives.\(^6\) Churchill therefore appointed d'Eyncourt to head a small Committee, consisting of Hetherington, Col. Dumble from the War Office and Col. Crompton, a well known engineer.\(^7\) Thus was born the Admiralty Landships Committee.

The Committee held their first meeting on February 22nd and decided to proceed with the building of two prototypes, one employing wheels and the other caterpillar tracks.\(^8\) In view of the confusion which has arisen concerning these designs it is important to realize exactly what was proposed. The wheeled type was based on a design by Crompton and consisted basically of a platform, armoured and closed, fitted to an existing wheeled tractor to carry 50 men and machine guns.\(^9\) The caterpillar type was virtually

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\(^2\) Ibid., p. 55-6.

\(^3\) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 7.

\(^4\) Memorandum by Hetherington, N.D., Stern Papers, Kings College, London, 1/C/1.

\(^5\) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 8.

\(^6\) Minutes by D'Eyncourt 18/9/16, Adm. 116/1339.

\(^7\) Ibid.

\(^8\) Ibid.

identical, merely substituting tracks for the wheels. Thus both proposals were in line with Churchill's original idea for an armoured infantry carrier mounting machine guns. These weapons were clearly designed to transport the infantry across no-man's land with as few casualties as possible. Once the enemy trenches had been reached the infantry would have presumably de-camped from the landships, taken the trench line and then re-loaded for an assault on the second line. Obviously this was a different concept from the tank as eventually developed, where the idea was that the tanks would substantially over-run and reduce the enemy machine gunners before the infantry appeared on the scene.

Soon after the meeting, the two designs were submitted to Churchill who authorized d'Eyncourt to proceed "As proposed and with all despatch". The committee decided to engage Fosters of Lincoln to build 6 of the "big wheel" type and use Pedrail tracks to construct 12 of the caterpillar type. The cost of these machines was estimated at 70,000 pounds and authorization to spend this money was given by Churchill. It was expected to produce the first "big wheel" type in 12 weeks and the first caterpillar two weeks later. In the event technical difficulties were to delay the production of the two landships for a much longer period. With the caterpillar type it was found that to accommodate 50 men the vehicle had to be 40 feet long. This produced intolerable strains on the chassis and it was thought that the vehicle would be unable to negotiate the narrow roads in France, so it was cut in two and the two halves articulated together. It was then discovered that the Pedrail system was not strong enough for the articulated machine so a new type, the "Bullock creeping grip" was ordered from America. Meanwhile the "big wheel" type had been abandoned. The design was found to be

(1) Landship Committee Minutes 22/2/15, Adm. 116/1339.
(2) D'Eyncourt to Churchill 24/2/15 and Minutes by Churchill 24/2/15, Mun 5/210/1940/22.
(4) Minutes of a meeting between Crompton, Director of Air Division's representatives and Director of Contracts 24/3/15, Stern Papers, 1/C/1.
(5) Ministry of Munition, Tanks, p. 12.
(7) Ibid.
practicable but it formed a very large target and would have been a menace
to other wheeled traffic in the event of a break down. ¹ Fosters then turned
to other alternatives. ² At this point the Admiralty was contacted by the
War Office and a decision taken to form a joint Committee on landships. ³

The revived interest in the "tank" by the War Office may be put down to
Swinton. In early June he had placed his paper on machine gun destroyers
before the Commander-in-Chief, Sir John French. French passed the paper on
to the War Office with the remark that the machines appeared to be of
"considerable tactical value". ⁴ Another trial was held using a Foster-Daimler
105 HP tractor, ⁵ but at this point the War Office learned of the seemingly
more promising Admiralty experiments and the joint Committee was formed.

The intervention of the War Office had one immediate effect. They
informed the Landships Committee that the machines "should be designed to
carry a minimum of men and a maximum of gun fire" and suggested that 2 x 2
pounder pom poms and two machine guns be carried in each portion of the
articulated machines. ⁶ Obviously although the War Office reduced the number
of infantry to be carried and increased the emphasis on fire power the
Landship was still largely considered to be an infantry platform for they
also specified that loopholes be cut out for musketry fire. ⁷ Soon however,
the War Office requirements underwent another change to bring them more in
line with Swinton's original conception. They asked for a vehicle with a
top speed of four miles per hour able to climb an earth parapet 5' thick
and 5' high and to bridge a gap of 5'. It should carry 10 men, 2 machine
guns and one light quick firing gun. ⁸ Thus due to the intervention of

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¹ Landships Committee Minutes 14/6/15, Stern Papers, 1/C/1.
² Fosters to Crompton 5/6/15, Stern Papers, 01/7.
³ W.O. to Admiralty 21/6/15; Admiralty to War Office 30/6/15, Adm. 116/1339.
⁴ Undated note by French, W.O. 158/831.
⁵ Mun 5/211/1940/13.
⁶ Landships: Preliminary Work - memorandum by D'Eyncourt 16/6/15, Stern Papers, 1/C/1.
⁷ Landships Committee - Progress Report 23/6/15, in Ibid.
⁸ Minute by War Office 1/7/15, Mun 5/210/1940/22.
Swinton and the War Office the type of machine being investigated by the Landships Committee changed from an armoured transport for troops to a form of light mobile artillery. The course was now clear for the invention of the tank proper.

The War Office specifications caused a split within the Landships Committee. Crompton was convinced that only an articulated machine would meet the new weight requirements. D'Eyncourt thought a single non-articulated machine should be built and he instructed a Mr. Tritton of Fosters to proceed with one half only of the articulated model "to have the Bulloch tracks, a superimposed gun carriage on top with two-pounders fitted in it". Immediate difficulties were encountered in the construction of this machine which afterwards became known as "Little Willie". Placing the gun turret on top of the body raised the centre of gravity which meant that the machine tended to tip over when mounting a parapet. Also it was found that the Bulloch track was not strong enough and had a tendency to fly off the chassis. The work of the Committee appeared to have come to nothing, for "Little Willie" as well as having these defects did not meet the War Office specification concerning the climbing of a 5' parapet.

Considering conditions in France this was an essential attribute. At this stage Lt. Wilson of the R.N.A.S. who had been working with Tritton, suggested that the problem of the high centre of gravity could be solved if the tracks were raised to encircle the entire sides of the tank. By elongating those sides to form a rhomboid greater length of track and therefore greater traction could be provided. The problem of the position of the guns was solved by placing them in detachable "sponsons" on the sides. According to Tritton this suggestion also came from Wilson. There was, however, one

(1) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 20.
(2) Minutes of proceedings before the Royal Committee on Awards to Inventors - Tritton's evidence 21/10/19, Q2818, Mun 5/210/1940/33.
(3) Ibid., Q2579.
(5) Royal Commission on Awards to Inventors - Tritton's evidence 21/10/19, Q2580, Mun 5/210/1940/33.
(6) Ibid., Q2597-2602. D'Eyncourt claimed that he invented the sponson. See memorandum by D'Eyncourt, N.D., D'Eyncourt Papers.
major technical problem to be solved before a prototype of the Tritton-Wilson tank (later called "Mother") could be built. None of the existing tracks were of sufficient strength for the new design. In the relatively short time of a month Tritton and Wilson had solved this problem, and in October work began on the new design. By December work on "Mother" had been completed and successful trials were conducted in front of a large gathering of military and civilian officials at Hatfield Park on February 2nd. 1916.

A brief recapitulation of these events is now necessary. Of the four or five early attempts to produce a trench-crossing vehicle, only Swinton's resembled the tanks which were eventually produced. Only he had suggested that heavy guns be mounted on the vehicle and that the number of men carried be limited to those necessary to drive the tank and fire the guns. The design suggested by Churchill in his letter to Asquith on January 5th. 1915, and later followed up using two different methods of traction, by the Landships Committee, was essentially a platform for the transport of infantry, a different concept altogether. In fact the Committee continued to work on these designs until, under Swinton's impulse, War Office interest revived and it was the specifications developed by the War Office which caused the Admiralty Committee to commence the work that led to the development of "Mother". Without Swinton and the War Office it is doubtful if anything resembling the original tanks would have been developed by the Admiralty Committee. This is not to say that the Landships Committee did not play a useful role for when the War Office-Swinton concept had developed the military had at their disposal a number of experts and establishments which, with the correct direction, could produce speedy results.

What of Churchill's role in these events? He undoubtedly deserves much credit for turning his imagination at an early stage in the War to the

(1) Royal Commission on Awards to Inventors - Wilson's evidence, Q3084-89.  
(2) Minute by D'Eyncourt 16/10/15, Stern Papers, 1/C/1.  
(3) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 28.
problem of transporting infantry safely across no-mans land. He also deserves credit for setting up the Landships Committee, sustaining it with money, and helping to ensure its survival when he left the Admiralty. It should be clear however, that this Committee did not work on a machine which would now be considered to be a tank. This was Swinton's contribution and it is entirely possible that if the Landships Committee had never existed, Swinton's design would have been built anyway. But without the Landships Committee it is certain that it would not have been built so quickly and to this extent Churchill can justly claim to have hastened the development of the tank.

We must now examine Churchill's account of the invention of the tank to which a separate chapter in Volume II of The World Crisis has been devoted.¹ One general point should initially be made. With minor amendments the account given by Churchill from page 510 to page 516 has been taken from his Statement to the Royal Commission on Awards to Inventors which sat in 1919.² The duty of this body as far as the tank was concerned was to ascertain the persons responsible for its invention and to allocate monetary rewards to them. Churchill from the first waived his claim to any cash payment³ but in the document submitted set out to make the best case for himself that he could. Obviously this part of his account in The World Crisis is not a cool and detached history, but rather a narrative originally written to convince a court of its validity. Nor, being written in 1919, could the perspective of time and the discovery of new facts about the early attempts to build the tank, add anything to Churchill's discussion.

The opening two pages of Churchill's narrative,⁴ however, are not taken from his Royal Commission statement although they follow the same line. In these pages Churchill describes the experiments conducted by Admiral

¹ The World Crisis, p. 508-526.
² Copy N.D., D'Eyncourt Papers,
³ Ibid.
⁴ The World Crisis, p. 508-9.
Bacon to find a bridging device to cross ditches. Bacon's work is described by Churchill as one of the first steps in the "chain of causation" leading to the invention of the tank.\(^1\) It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Churchill has made too much of these experiments and that they occupy an inordinate amount of space in his brief account. It has been shown that all Bacon was attempting to do was to equip a tractor with a form of portable bridge which it laid across a trench and then pulled up after passing over. This machine was surely a far cry from the idea of the tank. Neither did Bacon's experiments lead on to future developments and this is admitted by Churchill.\(^2\) Yet prominence is still given to Bacon's ideas, the possible reason being that Churchill is anxious to establish the antecedents of the tank as far back as possible and to establish them firmly among developments initiated by the Admiralty. Finally Churchill is incorrect in stating that Caterpillar traction was used on Bacon's tractor.\(^3\) Descriptions of the machine given by others make it quite clear that the machine was a conventional wheeled tractor.

Following the detailed narrative of Bacon's work Churchill has a brief paragraph on the early contributions of Hankey and Swinton.\(^4\) However, no description of the weapons devised by the two men is included. With Hankey's idea this is of little importance as his device was merely a form of super steam roller. The omission of Swinton's conception is more important. It is quite clear from the description given earlier that Swinton envisaged a machine which was recognizably like the original tanks but by not giving the necessary details Churchill is able to make the statement that all concerned were working on the same type of machine.

Churchill is also rather severe on the War Office authorities, who

\(^{1}\) The World Crisis, p. 508.
\(^{2}\) Ibid., p. 509.
\(^{3}\) Ibid.
\(^{4}\) Ibid., p. 510.
stopped work on the project after seeing a caterpillar perform under adverse conditions. The facts were that no competent design existed that would work and the War Office authorities were quite correct in seeing that any such machine would have great difficulty in operating on the Western Front. Therefore to put down the demise of this experiment to "official obstruction" would seem to be going too far. Where Churchill is correct is in attacking the lack of persistence and imagination which led these authorities to abandon the attempt after one trial.

The formation of the Admiralty Landships Committee is next discussed by Churchill. The steps that led to the setting up of that Committee are given and they agree generally with those listed earlier in this chapter.

On the work of this Committee Churchill's account is much less reliable. He states that the placing of orders for 12 of the caterpillar type and 6 of the big wheel type developed by the Committee was the "moment when the actual manufacture of the first tanks was definitely ordered". He further states that "an effective machine was designed as the direct outcome of this authorization". He also considers that the efforts of Swinton "were brought to nothing by the obstruction of some of...[his] superiors" and that Swinton was "unfortunate in not being able to command the resources necessary for action, or to convince those who had the power to act". Not one of these claims is correct. Regarding the first claim, Churchill never gives a description in The World Crisis of the two types of machine which were being built by the Admiralty Committee. However it has been shown that they were not actually tanks in the true sense of the word but merely armoured infantry carriers, designed to transport 50 men across

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\(1\) The World Crisis, p. 512. The names missing from the minutes quoted in The World Crisis are in the first letter written by Scott-Moncrieff, Col. Jackson and Holden, and Col. Holden later in the same letter. The second minute was from Scott-Moncrieff to Holden and the third was by Holden.

\(2\) Ibid., p. 513.

\(3\) Ibid., p. 512-4.

\(4\) Ibid., p. 515.

\(5\) Ibid.

\(6\) Ibid.
no-mans land. This was a completely different weapon and concept from the first tanks. Therefore it is hardly correct to say that the orders placed for these machines amounted to the moment when the manufacture of the first tanks was authorized. Nor is Churchill correct in claiming that an effective machine was built as the direct outcome of this order. It was shown in some detail earlier that eventually the work of the Landships Committee finished in a series of blind alleys and impractical designs. What saved their work from oblivion was the introduction of the War Office specifications. These were of crucial importance for they changed the concept under consideration from an infantry carrier into the tank proper. Thus it was this order that led to the building of "Mother" and not the order for the original 18 machines signed by Churchill. Obviously then Churchill is again in error in claiming that Swinton's ideas came to nothing through War Office obstruction for it has been seen that the final War Office specifications were based fairly closely on Swinton's original idea and although the War Office had been very slow to respond to Swinton's proddings there is no evidence to suggest that they deliberately tried to stifle his invention. Indeed as has been shown it was the War Office that took the initiative in establishing the joint Committee under whose auspices "Mother" was developed.

Finally, Churchill details the honourable part he played in ensuring that the Landships Committee was retained by the Admiralty. He then goes on to say

"[the Admiralty] decided that the construction of one experimental machine should be proceeded with. One alone survived. But this proved to be the 'Mother Tank' which, displayed in Hatfield Park in January, 1916, became the exact model of the tanks which fought on the Somme in August, 1916, and was the parent and in principle the prototype of all the heavy tanks that fought in the Great War."\(^1\)

This statement is largely at variance with the facts. There never seems to have been a decision to concentrate on one "tank" only, although, as we saw

(1) The World Crisis, p. 516.
earlier, D'Eyncourt instructed Tritton to push ahead with one half of the articulated caterpillar because of lack of progress on the original design. (The "big wheel" type had already been cancelled due to technical difficulties.) This machine was therefore developed ahead of the articulated design but it was not "Mother" as implied by Churchill but "Little Willie". "Mother", as has been shown, was developed independently by Tritton and Wilson while work was still progressing on "Little Willie". Furthermore it should be clear that even "Little Willie" did not arise out of the initial Landships Committee's design but as a result of the War Office specifications.

What has Churchill attempted to do in this chapter of The World Crisis? Largely he has attempted to establish a direct link between Admiralty experiments on landships and the "Mother" tank and he postulates a chain of causation thus:

RNAS Armoured — Bacon — Hetherington — LCS — Big wheel — "Mother"
Cars —— Caterpillar

In fact the chain should run:

RNAS Armoured — Hetherington — LCS — Big wheel — "Mother"
Cars —— Caterpillar
— Swinton —— War Office —— Joint Committee — Little Willie

It can be seen at a glance from the second chart that Churchill has omitted from his account the vital role played by Swinton and the War Office and has completed confused the process whereby "Mother" evolved out of the work of the Joint Committee which incidently is not even mentioned in The World Crisis. Thus when Churchill claims that he is entitled to the credit "for initiating and sustaining the action which led to the tanks being produced",¹ this is at best a half truth. He is entitled to credit for establishing and sustaining the Landships Committee which provided the expertise that enabled the Swinton-War Office specifications to be quickly

¹ The World Crisis, p. 515.
translated into a practical machine. Thus although Churchill played an honourable role in the inception of the first tank it was rather more indirect than has been indicated in The World Crisis.

Utilization

Somme

Churchill concludes his section on Tanks in Volume II of The World Crisis by giving a brief description of the use to which tanks were put in the battle of the Somme.1 This material is expanded and augmented in Volume III Where two pages of a chapter on the Somme are devoted to tanks.2 In his analysis of this phase of the battle Churchill makes two main points. The first is that the tanks were used prematurely. "The first twenty tanks, in spite of my protests and the far more potent objections of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George, were improvidently exposed to the enemy at the Battle of the Somme. The immense advantage of novelty and surprise was thus squandered".3 Churchill's second point is that despite the papers written by himself and Swinton on the proper use of tanks,4 on the Somme they "were dispersed in twos and threes against specified strong points or singly for special purposes. They were used as the merest makeweight."5 How valid are these criticisms?

It is certainly true that Churchill, Asquith and Lloyd George protested to Haig on the use of tanks on the Somme.6 To these names could also be added those of d'Eyncourt, Hankey and Swinton.7 Haig however remained adamant. He told Robertson that the September plan was the last opportunity to shift the enemy from the entrenched position before Autumn. The examination of

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(1) The World Crisis, p. 525.
(2) Ibid., p. 1052-3.
(3) Ibid., p. 525.
(4) Ibid., p. 525 and p. 1052-3.
(5) Ibid., p. 1053.
(7) D'Eyncourt to Robertson 25/7/16, Mun 5/210/1940/22; Hankey to Robertson 20/4/16, Cab. 17/167; memorandum by Swinton 27/7/16, W.O. 158/834.
prisoners and captured documents had convinced him that German morale was cracking and he considered the coming battle could be decisive. He therefore felt bound to use any available weapon including the tanks.¹ This explanation has been accepted by Terraine who strongly disagrees with Churchill's line and says that it was "absurd" to suppose that Haig would hold back a new weapon in a decisive battle.² This statement however begs the important question of whether there was any reasonable expectation that the September battle would be decisive. Even with the contemporary evidence available to Haig the prospects did not seem hopeful. Fewer divisions would be engaged than on the first day of the battle. The only reserves available were the remains of divisions that had fought in the opening phases of the Somme.³ There was also no sign of German morale on the battlefield cracking on a large scale as against the possibly low morale of small groups of prisoners. Furthermore the ground over which the tanks were to be used was particularly unsuitable being torn up and cratered.

The assumption of success then would appear to be wildly optimistic and to this extent Churchill's criticism of Haig for using the tanks in what could only be a minor success would appear to be justified. However, there is another side to the story. There is always a case to be made for using a new weapon in small numbers at first and not making the offensive dependent absolutely on its performance. Thus of the tanks which fought on the Somme Swinton recorded "progress...was hampered in every direction by the frequent failure of the machines, owing to minor defects. There were, in addition, the inevitable difficulties with guns, mountings and various small fitments."⁴

In other words the Mark I tank was not a particularly efficient fighting machine and one tank Commander regarded "as too appalling to contemplate the prospect of attacking with 300 or 400 Mark I tanks absolutely untested in battle."⁵ There was the further point that a small scale trial enabled a

¹ Haig to Robertson 29/7/16, W.O. 158/843. See also Edmonds, 1916, V.2, p. 233-5.
³ Rawlinson Diary 30/8/16, Rawlinson Papers, 1/5.
⁴ Swinton, Eyewitness, p. 261.
group of battle experienced crew to be built up and used to train the men for the larger number of tanks that were being produced. Thus Fuller, hardly an apologist for the General Staff, thought that the lessons learned on the Somme fully justified the employment of tanks. In the World Crisis Churchill has ignored the benefits that accrued to the Tank Corps in battle trained men and more efficient machines from the experience on the Somme. On balance it seems that these advantages, although they played no part in Haig's decision to use the tanks, outweighed the disadvantages of exposing them to the enemy, especially, as Churchill himself admits, the Germans made no use of the disclosure to build their own tanks.

What of Churchill's point that the tanks were not used in the correct manner by G.H.Q.? Certainly in dispersing the tanks in small packets along the front, with no reserves, Haig ensured that any breakthrough would lack penetration. Swinton's concept of using the tanks in a large wedge to crash through the entire defensive system was totally ignored. However, Churchill also implies that had the tanks been used differently great results could have been obtained. Given the small number of tanks used this seems improbable. Even if Swinton's wedge formation had been adopted any breakthrough would have occurred on such a narrow front that it is unlikely that the Germans would have been forced into a general retreat. Furthermore, the mechanical defects of the Mk I tank made it virtually certain that the tank wedge would have disintegrated before the German reserve line had been reached. Thus, although Churchill's criticism of the use made of tanks on the Somme by G.H.Q. is valid, he greatly overestimates the loss caused to the British attack by the adoption of these tactics.

(2) The World Crisis, p. 525 and p. 1053.
Churchill claims that the scheme for a tank attack, unfolded in his paper of December 1915, was not put into operation until the Battle of Cambrai in November 1917 and that consequently this was the battle in which tanks were used properly for the first time. Before some of the more controversial statements made in his section on Cambrai in *The World Crisis* are considered a brief outline of the battle should be given.

On November 20th, the British Third Army broke into the Hindenburg defences on a six miles front to a depth of six miles. There had been no preliminary bombardment and for the first time tanks had led the attack en masse. The plan had been to break through the three lines of the defences with a view to allowing the cavalry through to Valenciennes-Douai to cut the communications of the German forces further to the north. In fact the third line of the Hindenburg system was not pierced except in a few isolated sections. The attack slowly developed into a slogging match for the heights of Bourlon Wood and eventually it petered out. On November 30th, the Germans, attacking without tanks, recaptured almost all the ground gained by the British, and the battles ended in an inconclusive draw.

Churchill makes a series of important statements about this battle in *The World Crisis*. He ascribes most of the success in the early part of battle to the tanks. He claims that "there was no reason why a battle like Cambrai could not have been fought a year before, [or on a larger scale] or better still, why three or four concerted battles like Cambrai could not have been fought simultaneously in the spring of 1917." He is clearly aware of the audacity of these statements and of the arguments that can be brought against them.

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(1) *The World Crisis*, p. 525.
(2) Draft scheme for operation GY Third Stage, W.O. 158/349.
(4) Ibid., p. 1189.
"it will be said, such assertions take insufficient account of the practical difficulties, of the slowly gathered experience, of the immense refinements of study, discipline and organization required. Could, for instance, 3000 Tanks have been manufactured by the spring of 1917? Could the men to handle them have been spared from the front? Could their tactical training have been perfected behind the line and out of contact with the enemy? Could the secret have been kept? Would not preparation on so large a scale, even behind the line, have become apparent to the enemy? To all these questions we will answer that one-tenth of the mental effort expended by the Headquarters Staff on preparing the old-fashioned offensives of which the war had consisted, one-twentieth of the influence they used to compel reluctant Governments to sanction these offensives, one-hundredth of the men lost in them, would have solved all the problems easily and overwhelmingly before the spring of 1917. . . . Accusing as I do without exception all the great ally offensives of 1915, 1916, and 1917, as needlessly and wrongly conceived operations of infinite cost, I am bound to reply to the question, What else could be done? And I answer it, pointing to the Battle of Cambrai, 'This could have been done'. This in many variants, this in larger and better forms ought to have been done, and would have been done if only the Generals had not been content to fight machine-gun bullets with the breasts of gallant men, and think that that was waging war."¹

This harsh indictment of the General Staff is obviously central to Churchill's entire argument against the Western Front battles and it will be necessary to consider each of the points raised in some detail.

Were the tanks the decisive factor at Cambrai as claimed by Churchill? Clearly they were important especially in keeping British casualties low. The commander of the 6th. Division states "I attribute the very light casualties and success of the Division on 20th. November firstly of course to the moral effect of the tanks."² By 6 p.m. the six British divisions had suffered only 4,000 casualties³ whereas on the Somme often one division had recorded more than this total on the first day. However it is clear from the detailed divisional reports that there were other factors contributing to the easy success. For example the 187th Brigade (62nd. Division) got ahead of its supporting tanks but still managed to advance to timetable.⁴

(1) The World Crisis, p.1190.
(2) Sixth Division Report 17/12/17, W.O. 158/357.
(4) Ibid., p. 60.
The right wing of the 20th. Division arrived at the second objective at 11.30 a.m. in spite of the fact that all 11 tanks accompanying it had been knocked out. On the 6th. Division front the troops pushed through gaps left by the enemy in the wire largely without the help of tanks.

Finally we find later in the day the 187th. Brigade reporting "The tanks did good work at the start, but the battalion soon outstripped them, advancing steadily for some 1,400 yards up the Hindenburg front system behind a barrage which moved with remarkable precision." Obviously then, tanks were not the only factor in the rapid advance. The important contribution made by the artillery barrage was identified in the last quotation. This is mentioned by Churchill but it is hardly given the prominence it deserves. The new methods of ranging meant that the German batteries were immediately blanketed with fire and their response was quite ineffectual.

It should be made clear however that the development of the tank enabled the artillery to concentrate on the enemy's artillery and rear positions rather than on the destruction of the wire and to this extent the tank and the effectiveness of the artillery barrage were interrelated.

A second factor however was the state of the German defenders occupying the Hindenburg line at Cambrai. Ludendorff has testified that because of Passchendaele the line was weakly held by tired or landwehr divisions. Thus without the battle in the north, so condemned by Churchill, the initial breakthrough at Cambrai could have been much more difficult. In addition, the British had a superiority of three to one over the battle front.

Thirdly, fog, a factor that often came to the aid of the attacker in 1917 and 1918, played its part at Cambrai. It was found to be especially

(1) Miles, Captain W., Military Operations: France and Belgium 1917, V.3, p. 55.
(2) Sixth Division Report 17/12/17, Appendix A., W.O. 158/357.
(3) Miles, 1917, V.3, p. 61.
(4) The World Crisis, p. 1188.
effective in deadening the noise of the assembling tanks.¹

Finally, surprise, which returned to the battlefield at Cambrai, played an important role. It could be argued that surprise was only possible because the tank could now crush the wire but the Germans were to show in their counter-attack on November 30th and more importantly in their spring offensive in 1918 that surprise could be achieved without tanks. In any case it is clear that surprise as employed in the later battles of the war depended more on the development of the new artillery tactics than on the tank. Clearly tanks were but one factor in the new methods of warfare introduced in 1917.

What of Churchill's claims that Cambrai could have been fought on a larger scale? Certainly more tanks were available than the 400 used. By October 27th. 824 Mark IV tanks had been handed over to the Army by the Ministry of Munitions.² However the problems of assembling a great number of tanks at the front would have been formidable. In the first place there were only two cranes in France at this time capable of unloading tanks and this severely limited the speed of delivery from England.³ Furthermore waggons to transport tanks remained in short supply throughout 1917. To transport the 400 tanks to Cambrai improvised waggons had to be used and many of these were found to be too damaged after one journey to be used again.⁴ It was also found before Cambrai that the amount of road making material and stores need in the forward areas was too much for the light railways to carry and road transport had to be used.⁵ In addition the supplies needed by the tank corps were enormous. To keep the 400 tanks used at Cambrai in action for 10 hours were needed 28,000 gallons petrol, 2,000 gallons of oil, 16,000 gallons of water, 6,000 gallons of gear oil and

¹ Fuller, "Results and Deductions" [from Cambrai]. Fuller Papers, 1/165.
² Tank Supply 1917-18, Mun 4/775.
⁴ Ibid., p. 306. See also the narrative "Cambrai" in Cab. 45/200.
⁵ Miles, 1917, V.3, p. 39.
2,800 lbs of grease. Also 500,000 rounds of 6 lb shell and 5,000,000 rounds of machine gun ammunition were stockpiled. It is extremely doubtful if double the number of wagons and double the amount of stores, tank supplies and ammunition could have been concentrated with the facilities available in 1917 and it would seem that these logistic factors have been ignored by Churchill in his claim that Cambrai could have been fought on a larger scale.

It seems even more unlikely that Cambrai could have been fought a year earlier. It was shown in our earlier discussion that the first tanks were built in a remarkably short time and that the delay in reaching a satisfactory design was due to neither War Office nor Admiralty obstruction but was caused by the technical difficulties involved. The date of the authorization for the first tanks (Feb. 12th. 1916) does not seem unreasonable. The number originally sanctioned (100) might appear modest but it has to be remembered that the weapon was untried and that the figure had been suggested as the maximum desirable at this stage by Swinton. Now for "Cambrai" to have taken place in November 1916 it would have been necessary to build 400 machines by October at the latest, that is in a period of 8 months. For this to have been achieved a rate of about 50 tanks per month was needed, an extremely difficult task with the limited facilities available. Also had these tanks been built they would have been Mark I's, the Mark IV being developed out of the lessons learned on the Somme. To have entered a battle with 400 Mark I tanks would have been very risky indeed. On the Somme 25% of the numbers engaged broke down before they reached the start line and 25% of the remainder broke down on the start line. Of those remaining, 50% did not catch up with the infantry. Thus

(1) Training note no. 16 - Tank Tactics, Feb. 1917, Fuller Papers, TS/6.
(3) Minute by Lloyd George 12/2/16, Mun 5/7210/1940/10.
(4) Swinton, Eyewitness, p. 214.
(5) For tank production figures see Mun 4/744-775 and Mun 2/15-17
(7) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 36.
the projected attack would have been supported not by 400 tanks but by a little over 100. In fact the confusion by large scale breakdowns could have turned the battle into a shambles.

Could three or four battles like Cambrai have been fought in the Spring of 1917 as suggested by Churchill? It is clear from *The World Crisis* that Churchill envisaged these battles taking place simultaneously, so approximately 1200 to 1600 tanks would have been required. It would have been essential for these tanks to have been the new Mark IV type for after the Somme the Germans developed an armour piercing bullet that could penetrate Mark I armour.¹ The new design which incorporated many other refinements was not ready until February 1917² and production commenced in the first week of April.³ Even allowing "spring" to extend to June 1st. it was clearly not possible to build 1200 Mark IV tanks in two months.

Moreover the logistic factors which as was shown would have ruled out a Cambrai fought with double the number of tanks, would have applied in greater force six months earlier and with double the number of tanks again to contend with. Also, the factor of surprise, which played a large part in the success at Cambrai, could hardly have been maintained with 1200-1600 tanks strung out along the British front. Finally, it has to be remembered that Cambrai was chosen carefully because of the good going it offered to the tanks. Could two or three similar battlefields have been selected?

Flanders would always have presented difficulties because of the low lying ground and the devastation caused by previous battles. Also Cambrai had special features such as large woods close by in which it was possible to conceal the tanks and it is doubtful if these conditions could have been duplicated in the northern section of the British front.

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¹ Elles and Chamberlain, AVF of WWI, p. 36.
² Ibid.
³ Tank Supply 1917, Mun 4/774.
By now it should be obvious that Churchill's statements to the effect that the problems facing extended tank battles could have been solved by G.H.Q. had they applied their minds to them, are specious. The major difficulty to be overcome related to tank design and production and it was hardly within the province of G.H.Q. to solve these technical and industrial problems. Nor could they conjure heavy cranes, railway wagons, road transport, light railways out of nowhere. The problems to be faced were hard ones of logistics and communications and they cannot simply be dismissed with the vague generalities which Churchill uses in *The World Crisis*.

**Expansion?**

In the later volumes of *The World Crisis* are included many papers on strategy written by Churchill when out of office and as Minister of Munitions, in which tank policy occupies a prominent position. The message of these papers is always the same, that not enough is being made of this new weapon by G.H.Q. and that many more should be built. For example in *The World Crisis* Churchill prints his paper of November 9th, 1916 which advocated the immediate construction of 600 tanks and sketched out the plan for a battle in which they could be used to be best effect.¹ In a later chapter is published a paper written soon after he became Minister of Munitions in which he forecast tanks in a greatly increased numbers for 1918 and lamented the fact that the number of men assigned to the Tank Corps was so severely limited.² In the "Munitions Budget" for 1918 reproduced in full in *The World Crisis* he commented

"Tanks have never yet been used in numbers under conditions favourable to their action. Nor have we ever yet had a sufficiently reliable kind of tank, nor nearly enough of

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² Memorandum by Churchill 21/10/17, *The World Crisis*, Appendix N, p. 1442. For the remainder of this memorandum see p. 1149.
them....In consequence the army consider that they cannot allocate more than 18,500 men to the tank corps. This limits the number of fighting tanks required to an establishment of 1,080.... There will be no difficulty in supplying this requirement, but the new designs will not be available in full numbers until July, 1918. Thereafter considerable expansions would be possible.1

Further papers reprinted throughout volume three take up the theme of the restriction on the number of men allotted to the Tank Corps and its projected expansion.2 In the later document Churchill stated "the resources are available, the knowledge is available, the time is available, the result is certain: nothing is lacking except the will."3 He then reprints his letter to the Deputy C.I.G.S. informing him that in Spring 1919 3,629 heavy tanks would be available plus nearly 1000 from the Anglo-American tank factory at Chateauroux. By June another 1180 and 900 tanks respectively could be added to those totals which with existing models would give over 7,000 tanks. He suggested that numbers greatly in excess of these could be supplied if the direction was given.4 He states that his vision of the future was "10,000 fighting tanks, large and small, specially adapted to the ground they had to traverse, moving forward simultaneously behind the artillery barrage on fronts of assault aggregating 300 or 400 kilometres."5

In a final paper, dated September 9th., 1918 he claims that although the tanks corps personnel had been increased to 35,000 this number would still be inadequate for the tanks being produced and that "you [Lloyd George] will have large numbers of these invaluable weapons without the men to man them."6 He continued, "What has made it so difficult to develop a good policy about tanks has been the repeated shifts of opinion for and against them. Every time a new success is gained by their aid, there is an

(1) The World Crisis, p. 1167.
(2) Man-Power and The Situation 8/12/17, Ibid., p. 1225.
(4) Churchill to Harington, 21/6/18, Ibid., p. 1315-7.
(5) Ibid., p. 1322.
(6) Churchill to Lloyd George 9/9/18, Ibid., p. 1349.
immediate clamour for large numbers. The moment the impression of that success passes away, the necessary men and material are grudged and stinted."¹

Thus Churchill's message is clear. Before he became Minister of Munitions neither the authorities at home nor in the field appreciated the value of the tank as a weapon. After he became Munitions Minister he continually pressed for the use of more and more tanks on the Western Front and although considerable quantities were supplied they were never used in the numbers he would have liked, due to the repeated shifts in position by the military authorities. How accurate is this view of tank development in 1917 and 1918?

An examination of the attitude of the military authorities to tanks does not bear out the impression conveyed by The World Crisis that they were reluctant to employ this new weapon. Only a few days after the tanks first went into action on the Somme a conference between senior staff officers and Swinton recommended to Haig that 1000 tanks be ordered in addition to the number in hand.² Haig immediately agreed to this figure and informed the War Office accordingly.³ This policy was confirmed at a meeting between Haig, War Office authorities and Col. Stern of the Mechanical Warfare Supply Department⁴ (formerly Tank Supply Department).

Haig stated that tanks were required in as large numbers as possible and while improvements in design were desirable he considered almost any design better than no tank.⁵ Supply figures for the New Mark IV tank for 1917 were set at March 120, April 120, May 140, June 200, July 240, August 260, September 280.⁶ In April Stern, who was hardly enamoured with the military authorities, recorded an interview with Haig in which Haig "said he would do anything to help me; that a division of Tanks was worth 10 divisions of infantry and he probably underestimated it - told me to hurry up as many as I could -

(1) Churchill to Lloyd George 9/9/18, The World Crisis, p.1350.
(2) See W.O. 158/836.
(3) Haig to W.O. 2/10/16, W.O. 158/836.
(4) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 39.
(5) Montague (Minister of Munition) to Stephenson Kent 23/11/16, Mun 5/210/1940/10.
(6) Stern to Ellis ? January 1917, Stern Papers, 1/C/3.
not to wait to perfect them but to keep sending out imperfect ones as long as they came out in large quantities."¹ Later in the year the number of tanks required by the army was increased to 1600 heavy, 1200 medium and 800 supply tanks.² In fact the Mechanical Warfare Supply Department failed to produce anything like the quantities requested by the army. Their performance for the programme for the Mark IV was March nil, April 88, May 122, June 142, July 169, August 128, September 176, a total of 825 tanks against a projection of 1,360.³ This shortfall can be attributed to a combination of factors. A major delay was caused by the production of a new design but given the inefficiencies of the Mark I tank it is hard to see how this could have been avoided. Addison (Minister of Munitions) also claimed that the higher priority given to aero engines, the taking of steel plate for the production of standard ships and a shortage of skilled labour all contributed to delays in production.⁴ However the History of the Ministry of Munitions denies that aero engines or labour shortages were problems, noting that "all demands for labour had been met as they were put forward by the contractors."⁵ Instead four more prosaic factors are put forward to explain the delays, the poor quality of steel castings 33-40% of which had to be rejected, the small number of firms able to produce tank track links, the continual defects found in the Mark IV design and the slowness of the Mechanical Warfare Supply Department to respond to these problems.⁶ Thus it can be seen in this early period that the tardy development of the tank did not arise out of a reluctance on the part of the army to use the weapon because G.H.Q. consistently ordered more tanks than the Mechanical Warfare Supply Department could supply. Nor was it

(1) Stern Diary 24/4/17, Stern Papers, 1/C/3.
(2) W.O. to Ministry of Munitions 24/8/17, Mun 5/211/1940/37.
(3) Tank Supply 1917, Mun 4/774. The August figures were reduced because the tank factories apparently shut for a week's holiday.
(4) Memorandum by Addison 21/3/17, Stern Papers 1/C/3.
(5) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 49.
(6) Ibid.
the result of a lack of skilled labour or obstruction within the War Office. The delays arose out of difficulties in establishing quickly an efficient organization to launch the new weapon and because of technical problems that were probably inevitable in the design of such a relatively complex machine as the tank.

What of the period when Churchill became Minister of Munitions? When Churchill took up his post the position in regard to tanks was: of the 1000 Mark IV tanks requested by the War Office about 500 had been delivered.\(^1\)

In addition the War Office had asked for 700 Mark V, 600 of a lighter tank yet to be designed and 450 supply tanks by the 1st. March 1918.\(^2\) Churchill was forced to admit that although every effort would be made he feared that no more than 200 of the new heavy Mark V and 250 of the medium tanks could be supplied by that date.\(^3\) The War Office responded to the news by slightly reducing the number of heavy tanks required (to 600) and by extending the March 1st. deadline to June 1st.\(^4\) In the event not even these revised totals were supplied by the Ministry of Munitions and by June 1st. only about 400 Mark V and 130 of the new light tanks, the medium A had been delivered.\(^5\) It should be noted, however, that Churchill often brushed aside the reality of what the Ministry could deliver and set about proposing grandiose schemes of his own. The Tank Co-ordinating Committee of the Ministry recorded that on December 29th. Churchill had proposed a maximum programme of 10,000 tanks per annum, 4,500 to be built in Britain and 5,500 by the Joint Anglo-American factory in France.\(^6\) What the Co-ordinating Committee thought of this proposal was not stated but it should be noted that it would have involved a 400\% increase in the manufacture of 6 pounder guns and a 10 fold increase in personnel for the tank corps.\(^7\) Churchill's paper of October 21st. which he quotes in The World Crisis should be read in the

\(^{(1)}\) Tank Supply 1917, Mun 4/774 Exact figure 521 to end of July.
\(^{(2)}\) Minutes of a Conference at the Ministry of Munitions with War Office representatives 29/9/17, Mun 5/211/1940/37.
\(^{(3)}\) Ibid.
\(^{(4)}\) W.O. to Ministry of Munitions 15/10/17, Mun 5/12/200/56; Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 56.
\(^{(5)}\) For production figures see Mun 4/775 and Mun 2/15.
\(^{(6)}\) Minutes of the Tank Co-Ordinating Committee 7/1/18, Mun 4/5160
\(^{(7)}\) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 58.
light of these facts. It is now clear that his lamentations about the fixed ceilings for the tank corps were made in relation to the future expansion which he foresaw for tanks rather than to what was actually being produced. For the War Office quota of 18,500 was adequate for their suggested programme¹ and the Ministry of Munitions in the early months of 1918 was not capable of meeting even that requirement.

So far was the Ministry falling behind War Office demands that as early as January 20th. 1918 Churchill had to issue revised figures of output for the Mark V tank. ² He was bitterly disappointed with this result and asked the newly appointed head of the yet again reorganised mechanical Warfare Department, Admiral Moore, when production could be expected to meet the required number of 400 tanks per month.³ Moore optimistically estimated that this figure would be reached by June and maintained after August.⁴ Consequently Churchill informed the War Office that 4,459 tanks could be built by the Ministry between February 1st. 1918 and the 31st. March 1919⁵ and the next day this was approved by Lloyd George even though it went beyond the numbers requested by the War Office.⁶ This state of affairs however did not last. In May the Supreme War Council called for a greatly increased tank programme⁷ and as a result the War Office expanded their demands to 5,440 tanks from England and 1,500 from the Anglo-American factory at Chateauroux.⁸ The Ministry of Munitions however proved incapable of meeting even the original War Office programme. When Admiral Moore who had "not been a success"⁹ was removed from office it was found that

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¹ Minutes of a Conference at the Ministry of Munitions with War Office Representatives 29/9/17, Mun 5/211/1940/37.
² Minutes of a meeting at the Ministry of Munitions 11/2/18, in Ibid.
³ Churchill to Moore 20/2/18, in Ibid.
⁴ Munitions Council - Committee 57 - Tanks - Minutes 27/2/18, in Ibid.
⁵ Minutes of a Joint War Office, Admiralty, Munitions meeting 7/3/18, Mun 5/210/1940/3.
⁸ Moore to Churchill 20/6/18, Mun 5/211/1940/37.
⁹ Churchill to Lloyd George, C.V.4, p. 370-1.
although 900 Mark ** tanks had been ordered in September 1917 almost a year later not one had been delivered. The supply of medium D and C tanks was in a similar position.¹ In fact from April to July tank production as a whole had fallen 50% below the estimates.² As a result of these disclosures a new Tank Board to supervise production was formed.³ The Board was confronted almost immediately by a War Office demand for almost 6000 tanks of all types⁴ but before it could be considered the Armistice intervened.

It is now worth considering what tanks were actually produced by the Ministry of Munitions. In 1918 1136 heavy fighting tanks and 148 medium tanks were assembled.⁵ Of the 700 Mark V ordered in 1917 400 were made, of 1000 Mark V* 632, of 900 Mark V** one, of 900 Mark VII one, of 1750 medium C and D nil.⁶ Only one tank was ever produced at Chateauroux. Thus not even the 1917 War Office Programmes were met by the Ministry and in some weeks production of heavy tanks had fallen below 20.⁷ Why were so few produced? There were many factors involved some of which indicated that Britain had virtually reached the limit of the resources that could be devoted to war production. For example there were component shortages of all kinds including ball-bearings for the medium A and B tanks,⁸ gearboxes for all types,⁹ as well as engines¹⁰ and driving chains.¹¹ In addition there were inefficiencies within the Mechanical Warfare Department. McClean found on taking over that 1755 alterations to the working drawings supplied to contractors had taken place in the six months from February to July 1918.¹²

Each one involved delays in production. He also found that although the

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² Memorandum by Col. Stern 8/8/28, D'Eyncourt Papers.
³ Tank Board, Minutes of first meeting 15/8/18, D'Eyncourt Papers.
⁴ Tank Board Co-ordinating Committee, Minutes 25/10/18, Mun 4/5160.
⁵ See Mun 4/775, Mun 2/15,16,17.
⁶ History of the Ministry of Munitions Vol. 12, Part II, Appendix VI.
⁷ See Mun 2/16 Weeks ending July 6, August 17, September 21. The tank figures are again short for the week in August 1918.
⁸ Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 60.
⁹ Ibid., p. 61.
¹⁰ Ibid., p. 62.
¹¹ Ibid., p. 69.
supply of armour plate had been adequate no proper steps had been taken to have the "raw" plate machined to fit it for tank production with the result that shortages had been caused by the Mechanical Warfare Department itself.\(^1\)

This in turn had caused problems when men left tank factories on the Clyde to take up other work as a result of the lack of finished plate.\(^2\) A social factor in slowing production was the influenza epidemic which swept through the Midlands and the Eastern Counties in 1918.\(^3\) Of course a recurring problem throughout Churchill's administration was the shortage of skilled labour. This undoubtedly caused some reduction in output but it is hard to say exactly to what extent. For instance the difficulty with ball-bearing production did not stem from a shortage of skilled labour but the absence of any firms in the country capable of manufacturing to the required standard.\(^4\) The same could be said for gear boxes many of which had to be rejected by the main suppliers.\(^5\) Furthermore labour difficulties on the Clyde seem to have been artificially caused by the Ministry itself.

Thus it should be now clear that Churchill has given a quite misleading picture regarding tank production in 1917 and 1918. By reprinting many of his memoranda from the period he has given the impression that he was one of the few people urging tank production forward and that there was a vacillating and generally negative attitude by the military to its use. This impression has been achieved not so much by what he has said but by the unspoken assumptions behind the memoranda and the periodical repetition throughout the third volume of the "tank message". The facts, as has been shown, were very different and the military programmes exceeded, except for a brief period, even the estimates produced by the Ministry of Munitions. Thus it was not the will that was lacking as claimed by Churchill.

(2) Ibid.
(3) Ministry of Munitions, Tanks, p. 66.
(4) Ibid., p. 60.
(5) Minutes of a meeting at the Ministry of Munitions with the major Tank Contractors 20/6/18, Mun 5/211/1940/37.
but the means of production. Nor could Churchill claim that lack of military enthusiasm for the tank meant that he was deprived of essential materials for its construction. As has been shown material stocks seem to have been adequate. The country just did not have a reservoir of skill large enough to enable large scale production to be improvised quickly. Inefficiencies under Admiral Moore, a Churchill appointee, were also a factor. It would not be right, however, for Churchill to be blamed for these inadequacies. The situation was largely not of his making and was beyond the power of any Minister to rectify. On the other hand it is clear that the picture of the tank "prophet in the wilderness" presented in The World Crisis also cannot be accepted.

In conclusion it can be seen that there is a constant theme running through those sections of The World Crisis which deal with tanks. That theme is the resistance of the military to the new idea and their reluctance to use tanks once the machines had been foist upon them by a band of resolute pioneers. The adherence to this theme has led Churchill to distort his narrative in several ways. Firstly in his chapter on the invention of the tank Churchill has overrated the contribution made by such Admiralty personalities as Bacon at the expense of the vital influence of Swinton and the War Office and in so doing has thoroughly confused the process by which the mother tank emerged. Secondly in his section on the utilization of the tank, while making the valid point that as used on the Somme the tanks could have made no important contribution to the outcome, Churchill ignores the important military reasons for initially using a new weapon on a small scale which led such tank pioneers as Fuller and Swinton to support that particular operation. Concerning Cambrai, Churchill has merely magnified the part played by the tanks in the initial break-in and underrated the contribution made by the artillery barrage and the special conditions operating on the Cambrai front. His strictures against the military for not
fighting bigger and better Cambrai's a year earlier completely ignore industrial factors which prevented the manufacture of the Mk IV tank before early 1917 and the logistic factors which prevented its deployment on the battlefield before the end of the year. Finally, Churchill's contention that in 1917 and 1918 the military prevented the great expansion of the Tank Corps which could have been accomplished by the Ministry of Munitions has been shown to be totally unfounded. Once again Churchill ignores the industrial difficulties in mass producing such a complicated weapon as the tank at short notice and glosses over the failure of his own ministry to meet even the tank requirements of the much maligned military. Of course this is not to say that Churchill's arguments do not contain an element of truth. There was resistance to new ideas within the army and it is also true that in the initial phase the tanks were used in a particularly unimaginative way. Nevertheless, as has been shown, there was another side to the tank story and it is this balancing perspective that is missing from The World Crisis.

NOTE ON SMOKE

A considerable proportion of Churchill's first tank chapter is devoted to his discussions with Lord Dundonald on the plans of his ancestor, Admiral Cochrane for the manufacture of noxious fumes. It is suggested in The World Crisis that Dundonald's scheme was not proceeded with because Churchill deprecated the use of noxious fumes. However Hankey, to whom Churchill passed Dundonald's idea, suspected that Dundonald was "mad" and says he finally persuaded Churchill to drop the idea presumably on the grounds of its impracticality.

(1) The World Crisis p. 520.
(2) Hankey Diary 16/3/15, Hankey Papers 1/1.
(3) Ibid 27/3/15.
Submarine Policy and the Submarine War 1911-1918

In The World Crisis Churchill discusses the submarine as a weapon of war from the time he became First Lord in 1911 until the end of the war. However, at best, his treatment can be described as sketchy and only two chapters, or 45 pages out of a total of almost 1,500, are devoted to it. In these circumstances a detailed examination of the submarine war would be unjustifiable. All that is necessary is to summarize Churchill's main arguments and then test them against the evidence now available. For convenience Churchill's narrative may be divided into three sections: (1) Pre-War policy, (2) The First Submarine Campaign, 1915. (3) The Submarine War 1916-1918.

Pre-War Policy

Churchill states that when he took office Britain possessed 57 submarines. However he notes that most of these were small coastal types and only two large enough to operate overseas.1

On the eve of war this had been increased to 74, including 18 overseas boats. He compares this unfavourably with the German position where they had 28 boats capable of operating overseas by 1914. Why was British progress so slow? Churchill gives two reasons; the technical difficulties encountered in developing larger submarines; and a monopoly on submarine building held by "one particular firm".2 Churchill concludes that in the long run this relatively modest programme was probably all for the best because "an enormous scheme of submarine building before the war...[would] have stimulated to an equal, or perhaps greater, extent a corresponding German programme"3 Nor, Churchill adds, did Britain have a perceived use for a large submarine fleet as was the case with Germany.4

(1) The World Crisis, p. 690 and 691.
(2) Ibid., p. 691.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid., p. 693.
Turning to the uses to which submarines might be put in a future war, Churchill claims that "As early as 1912 [the Admiralty]...had begun to visualize in the over-sea submarine a new method of maintaining the close blockade of the German ports". Nevertheless "neither the British nor the German Admiralty understood...all that submarines could do [and] it was not until these weapons began to be used under the stern conditions of war that their extraordinary sea-keeping capacity became apparent."  

Churchill is prepared to admit one deficiency in Admiralty thinking towards submarines. In 1913 Lord Fisher had written a memorandum which claimed that the Germans would use submarines to sink merchant ships. Churchill states that neither he nor the First Sea Lord, Prince Louis, believed that this course would be adopted. On January 1st, 1914 Churchill replied to Fisher's paper. Assuming the role of the impartial historian, ("I must not hesitate to print documents which tell against my judgement"), Churchill quotes this document in The World Crisis. It says in part, "There are a few points [of your paper] on which I am not convinced. Of these the greatest is the question of the use of submarines to sink merchant vessels. I do not believe this would ever be done by a civilized Power". Breaking off the memorandum to paraphrase Churchill says "I proceeded to compare such outrages with the spreading of pestilence and the assassination of individuals". He then continues "These are frankly unthinkable propositions, and the excellence of your paper is, to some extent, marred by the prominence assigned to them". As a post war justification of the Admiralty's lack of foresight in this matter he concludes that even if Fisher's views had been accepted "it is not easy to see what particular action could have been taken before the war to guard against such an attack".

(1) The World Crisis, p. 691.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid., p. 692.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid., p. 693.
Finally, Churchill draws the attention of the reader towards the fact that this was a period of rapid change in submarine technology. The theories of one year were likely to be overtaken by the advances of the next. An example is given of the use of guns by submarines which Churchill says he initially opposed but which was eventually introduced. However, he claims that his view was justified because the only legitimate reason for mounting a gun in a submarine in the pre-war period was for attacks on warships and "no warship was ever sunk during the war by the gunfire of a submarine". Also in the many encounters between armed trawlers and submarines only two were sunk by gunfire.

Thus Churchill on the pre-war submarine. How accurate is his summary of events? Churchill's statement that British submarine development was retarded by the technical problems involved with the building of larger types can only be partly accepted. The first oversea boats developed by the British were the D and E class. The E class in particular was a very successful design and no great difficulties seem to have been encountered in its manufacture. However early in Churchill's period in office it was decided to lay down two much larger experimental types, Nautilus and Swordfish. Technical delays do seem to have retarded development of these larger submarines and eventually the design was dropped in favour of the improved E. It could be these boats to which Churchill refers but is is hardly accurate to imply that technical difficulties delayed all the larger types of British submarines.

The granting of a monopoly over submarine building to Vickers (Churchill was careful to avoid naming the firm in The World Crisis) does seem to have retarded development. Although initially the arrangement worked well, as orders for submarines increased Vickers fell further and further behind with supply. In particular the monopoly meant that the successful E class could

(1) The World Crisis, p. 694.
(2) Naval Staff - Development of British Submarines 6/4/14, Adm. 1/8374/93.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
not be built by other British firms. To increase British submarine
capacity the Admiralty were forced to order foreign boats to be built in
Britain under licence. This proved doubly unfortunate. Firstly the
designs proved inferior to the British E and in the case of the French
design this had been pointed out to Churchill by Keyes, the head of the
Submarine Service at the time. However Churchill had been convinced by
the Third Sea Lord, Admiral Moore, that Keyes was wrong and as a result,
resources and time were wasted on its construction. Secondly the firms
chosen to build the foreign design submarines had, because of the Vickers
monopoly, no experience in this kind of work and boats were not finally
completed until after war had broken out. According to Keyes it is
Churchill who deserves the credit for breaking the monopoly. Although
the decision had been taken before Churchill became First Lord, Keyes
claimed that McKenna would not confirm the decision and he had to wait
Churchill's arrival before this could be done.

Churchill's point that neither Britain nor Germany recognized the use
to which submarines would be used in wartime can readily be conceded. In
the pre-war years neither side contemplated the use of submarines against
merchant ships, Germany's policy was to wear away the superiority of the
Grand Fleet by the use of such weapons as the mine and submarine. The
Germans therefore had a need and a purpose for a large number of overseas
U-boats. British policy was based on the fighting of a decisive battle
with her superior battle fleet and the Admiralty saw the submarine as
largely a defensive weapon to be used around Britain's coasts as an anti-
invasion measure. The British did see a need for oversea boats to accompany
the battle fleet and to be used as substitutes for a close blockade of

(1) Naval Staff - Development of British Submarines 6/4/14, Adm. 1/8374/93.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Moore to Churchill 22/11/12, Keyes Papers, 4/1.
(4) Jameson Rear Admiral William, The Most Formidable Thing: The Story of the
Submarine from its Earliest Days to the End of World War I, London,
(5) Minute by Keyes 20/7/11, Keyes Papers, 4/21.
(6) Keyes to Churchill 7/1922, Churchill Papers, 8/41.
(7) Development of British Submarines, Adm. 1/8374/93.
surface ships but clearly the impulse for expansion was not present to the same extent as in Germany.

As to the uses of submarines in a future war, it should be noted that Churchill's account contains a contradiction. On the one hand he claims that in 1912 the Admiralty were considering using submarines to maintain a close blockade of Germany and on the other hand that the "extraordinary" sea keeping capacity of the submarine, surely necessary if such a blockade was to be maintained, did not become apparent until after the war had commenced. In fact as early as 1910 the submarine D1 had operated successfully 500 miles from its base and had "torpedoed" two cruisers before returning. Both the staff in 1912 and Jellicoe and Admiral May in reports on the 1913 Manoeuvres pointed out that enemy submarines were a potential danger to ships in any part in the British Isles. Finally the appearance of German submarines off Scapa Flow and the east coast of Scotland in the early months of the war would indicate that this problem had received some attention by the German naval staff in the pre-war period. Churchill is on much stronger ground when he states that this use of the submarine was not understood by the Admiralty. The Sea Lords largely ignored the exploits of D1 and D2 and when Churchill expressed interest in the Staff paper of 1912 he was assured by the Board that the Staff were using scare tactics.  

Churchill is also correct in stating that neither the British nor the German naval authorities envisaged the use of submarines for attacks on commerce. On the German side this is indicated by the fact that all U-boat attacks in the first months of the war were directed against warships. The 'guerre de course' was only adopted later in the war. On the British side, if as Churchill says in The World Crisis, he and Prince

(1) Keyes to de Robeck 21/8/13, Keyes Papers, 4/14.
(2) Naval manoeuvres 1913, Report by Rear Admiral Jellicoe, Adm. 116/3381; Manoeuvres 1913, Report of the umpire in Chief [Admiral May], Adm. 116/3881.
(3) Ibid.
Louis erred on this point they did so in the best of company. Other authorities who argued against Fisher's paper, and whom Churchill could have quoted, were Lord Sydenham a former secretary of the C.I.D.\(^1\) Asquith and Jellicoe,\(^2\) Keyes,\(^3\) and Richmond.\(^4\) Indeed Richmond wrote in 1914 "The submarine has the smallest value of any vessel for the direct attack upon trade".\(^5\) Where The World Crisis can be criticized on this issue is that although Churchill "has not hesitated" to print his adverse reply to Fisher's memorandum he has hesitated to quote it in full. In the original, the section paraphrased in The World Crisis reads,

"If there were a nation vile enough to adopt systematically such methods, it would be justifiable, and indeed necessary, to employ the extreme resources of science against them: to spread pestilence, poison the water supply of great cities, and, if convenient, proceed by the assassination of individuals."\(^6\)

It will be remembered that in The World Crisis Churchill says he compared these methods (minus poisoning water supplies) with the sinking of unarmed merchant ships, thus giving the impression that to him, all were equally repugnant. In the original the comparison is made with the purpose of advocating the adoption of these methods against any nation practising unrestricted submarine warfare, surely a very different thing. Of course Churchill adds the saving clause that "these are frankly unthinkable propositions". Thus once again, Churchill, by the skillful use of language, had managed to obscure his own position without descending to outright falsification. What was his motive in removing these sentences from The World Crisis? The obvious reason was that Churchill did not want his position on this issue misunderstood. He perhaps reasoned that it might be thought that he seriously advocated using these methods against Germany when

\begin{itemize}
  \item (1) Sydenham to Fisher 27/28/6/13, quoted Mackay, Fisher, p. 449.
  \item (2) For Jellicoe and Asquith see Ibid., p. 453-4 and p. 449.
  \item (3) Keyes R., Naval Memoirs, V.1, p. 53.
  \item (4) Richmond, Memorandum on Submarines 11/13/7/14, quoted in Marder A.J., Scapa Flow V.1, p. 364.
  \item (5) Ibid. emphasis added.
  \item (6) Churchill to Fisher 1/1/14, Churchill Papers, 8/177. See draft chapter Churchill Papers 8/85 with the offending sentences crossed through.
\end{itemize}
submarine warfare commenced. In fact almost the opposite was the case and when a proposal was put before the War Council to sow a blight amongst the German crops it was strongly condemned by Churchill. However, printing the document might have left a doubt that would have been difficult to remove while the official records remained closed. Furthermore, Churchill might have wished to conceal that, although these methods of warfare were indeed "unthinkable", he had thought of them, an exercise which many of his readers might have found shocking in itself. The fact remains, however, that whatever Churchill's reasons he has given a quite misleading version of a part of a memorandum in The World Crisis which was quoted for the purpose of showing his impartiality and objectivity as an historian.

What of Churchill's claim that even if the Admiralty had accepted Fisher's view there was little that they could have done to prepare for such an attack? This seems unlikely for it is possible that such obvious measures as the arming of merchant ships could have been given a higher priority. However an anti-submarine Committee was appointed by Churchill in the pre-war years. After extensive investigation the Committee could only recommend such procedures as frequent air patrols, trawler patrols, minelaying off hostile ports and the training of special lookouts for ships. They reported that no system capable of general application had been so far evolved. Of course the Committee was concerned with submarine attack on war ships and solutions involving the protection of merchant ships were not within its province. However it can hardly be said that the Committee advanced anti-submarine warfare in any significant way and this lack of success may have led Churchill to omit all mention of its work from The World Crisis.

Churchill's point that the policy of the Admiralty towards submarines must be judged in the context of the rapid development of the weapon is a fair

(1) War Council Minutes 24/2/15, "Mr. Churchill...drew the line at sowing a blight which was analogous to poisoning food".
(2) Report of Anti-Submarine Committee 5/5/14, Keyes Papers, 4/5.
(3) Ibid.
one. Before the war the submarine was an untried weapon, the full potential of which could only be realized during a war. However, the example he chooses to illustrate this point, the arming of submarines with guns, is a curious one. Apparently he chose this example to defend his pre-war policy of opposing the introduction of guns into British submarines. But this is a very minor point and totally uncontroversial. No authority has argued that British submarines were hampered in their earlier operations by lack of guns, and as Churchill says, the torpedo is by far the best weapon for a submarine to use against a warship. Perhaps Churchill's need to defend his pre-war policy in toto led him to include this minor matter in The World Crisis or perhaps he thought that his reputation would be enhanced by the introduction of a spurious controversy, on which his policy could be approved by all. Even in this case The World Crisis is slightly misleading. It will be remembered that Churchill claims his judgement that guns should not be put in submarines for the purposes of sinking warships is confirmed by two facts; (1) no warship was ever sunk by the gunfire of a submarine and (2) only two trawlers were sunk by submarines during the war. The first fact is uncontroversial and does support Churchill's case. The second example does not. It has to be remembered that merchant ships and not armed trawlers were the submarine's targets. Therefore on encountering a trawler a submarine could either remain submerged and remove itself from the scene, hoping to escape detection and thus be in a position to mount surprise attacks on unalerted merchant ships, or sink the trawler by torpedo. The first alternative was usually preferred because commanders did not want to waste valuable torpedos on secondary targets such as trawlers. There was seldom any reason for a submarine to risk a gun duel with a ship of unknown armament, and this, rather than Churchill's explanation, would seem to be the reason that only two trawlers were sunk by submarine gunfire.
The First U-Boat Campaign - 1915

By giving his chapter on this period the title of the "First Defeat of the U-Boats" Churchill leaves the reader in no doubt of his view of the eventual outcome of the U-Boat campaign. In a discussion of Admiralty counter-measures which were taken after the German announcement of the campaign, Churchill reprints a long memorandum which he wrote on February 11. The steps taken by the Admiralty are listed as; netting the Straits of Dover, the north channel between Scotland and Ireland and the Southern Irish Sea; providing trawler and destroyer patrols for these defences; patrolling the Southampton-Havre troop convoy route; institution of a coast watch in areas likely to be used by U-Boats; arming as far as possible the patrolling trawlers, drifters and yachts, and development of the decoy or Q ship strategem.¹ In addition, scientific investigation was ordered into such devices as hydrophones, bomb lances² and explosive sweeps.³ Churchill is convinced that these measures achieved success. He points out that in March 6,000 vessels entered or left British ports and only 21 were sunk;⁴ that the Dover barrage proved a great success and forced U-boats to make the long north about journey around Scotland to reach the Western approaches;⁵ that the merchant seamen became increasingly confident in their approach to the U-boat;⁶ and that the patrolling flotillas of small craft and the Q ships became increasingly effective.⁷ He concludes that the Germans suffered substantial U-boat losses and "by May their premature and feeble campaign had been completely broken, and for nearly eighteen months, in spite of tragic incidents, we suffered no appreciable inconvenience".⁸

Has Churchill given a fair picture of the first U-boat campaign? In fact the immediate Admiralty response to the U-boat menace was a good deal

¹ The World Crisis, p. 697-701.
² Ibid., p. 702.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid., p. 703.
⁵ Ibid., p. 704.
⁶ Ibid.
⁷ Ibid.
⁸ Ibid.
more lethargic than the impression given by Churchill's account. On the outbreak of war for reasons not altogether obvious, the Submarine Committee, which it will be remembered reported to Churchill in May 1914, was dissolved,\(^1\) despite such obvious German successes as the torpedoing of the three cruisers in September. No more thought seems to have been given to anti-submarine warfare until the return of Fisher to the Admiralty in November. Then on the Fourth Sea Lord's prompting\(^2\) an anti-submarine Committee under Commander Donaldson was set up.\(^3\) It was this committee that recommended most of the measures mentioned by Churchill in *The World Crisis*.\(^4\) Thus these early anti-submarine measures owe less to Churchill's initiative than the contents and context of his memorandum of February 1915 would lead us to believe.

Churchill is also misleading on the effectiveness of several of the measures adopted during this period. For example, although he claims the Dover barrage forced U-boats to travel around the north of Scotland, this was true of the larger boats only. The small German B and C boats based in Flanders repeatedly passed the Straits during 1915,\(^5\) and it has been estimated that in the last six months of the year over 100 vessels were sunk by mines laid by these craft.\(^6\) As for bomb lances and hydrophones, the former device was eventually found to be totally ineffectual and no submarines were ever sunk by it. Hydrophones were introduced in 1915\(^7\) but efficient sets were not ready until 1917\(^8\) and eventually proved of limited use. Q ships had no success during Churchill's period in office though they did sink three submarines between July and September.\(^9\) In an early draft of this chapter Churchill was preparing to make large claims for Q

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3. Donaldson to Fisher 28/11/14, in Ibid.
7. Memorandum to Captain Dumas, Adm. 137/1047.
ships. "Ultimately during the great submarine campaign in 1917 as many as
- were constructed and commissioned, and during the whole course of the war-
submarines were entrapped and destroyed by this device alone, a number
exceeding those destroyed by any other single agency". The blanks in
Churchill's deleted paragraph can now be filled in. About 215 Q ships
were commissioned and 10 U-boats were sunk by them in the course of the war
but none after August 1917. Nor was Churchill correct in his assumption
that Q ships sunk more submarines than any other agency. Mines, depth
charges and ramming all caused more U-boat sinkings than Q ships, and gun-
fire caused just as many. Perhaps it was a realization of this fact that
led Churchill to omit the paragraph. There is no doubt however, that the
Q ship appealed to Churchill as a weapon of war.

Nor were the hundreds of armed yachts, traders and drifters which were
pressed into service particularly effective during this period. By the end
of December 1915 the patrols had accounted for only one or two enemy
submarines.

It is now known that convoy was found to be the key weapon against
submarine attack on merchant ships but in his account of the 1915
submarine campaign Churchill does not mention this solution. Is there any
evidence to suggest that this idea was put forward and ignored under his
administration? Of the ideas on anti-submarine warfare put forward
by the more senior officers, Hall favoured decoys, Beatty decoys and
air patrols, Jellicoe tracking submarines by W/T and Richmond patrol lines
of armed ships. (Richmond had suggested convoy for troops, bullion etc.

(1) Churchill Papers 8/146. The paragraph was inserted after the sentence
ending "the most brilliant and daring strategems in the naval war", on p. 702.
(2) Grant, U-Boats Intelligence, p. 182-190.
(3) Ibid.
(4) By April 60 yachts had been armed and 500 trawlers and drifters with
another 120 being fitted out. Corbett Sir J., Naval Operations V.2,
p. 389-90.
(5) Grant, U-Boat Intelligence, p. 182-3.
(6) S.S. Hall to the Admiralty 30/8/15, Adm. 137/1097.
(7) Beatty to the Admiralty 20/6/15, Adm. 137/1047.
(8) Jellicoe to the Admiralty 20/6/15, in Ibid.
(9) Memorandum by Richmond 1/4/15, in Ibid.
from abroad but stated that there were not the smaller craft available for escort.)

An officer on the Iron Duke did suggest that merchant ships proceed in company through waters where submarines were operating but nothing came of his proposal. Clearly convoy was an idea whose time had not yet come and Churchill can hardly be blamed for adhering to the solutions put forward by his principal advisors.

What of Churchill's claim that by May 1915 the British counter-measures had defeated the U-boats and that the campaign had been an abject failure? In fact under Churchill's administration only four were sunk and if German U-boat strength is taken at the beginning of the campaign (February) and at the end (October) it will be found that during the period the number of U-boats had increased by 26. Statistics of shipping losses are hardly more favourable to the British. From February to December 1915, 30 German submarines had torpedoed 220 British ships, a total gross tonnage loss of 731,788. Approximately 140 ships (gross tonnage 680,000) had been damaged in the same period. So far from May seeing the demise of the campaign as claimed by Churchill the highest monthly losses for the year were reached in August (135,153) and September (89,693). In the autumn 92 ships were sunk in the Mediterranean by only 6 U-boats. Equally alarming was the fact that although since the beginning of the war Britain had built 1,326,529 tons of merchant shipping, for the period of the U-boat campaign only 650,919 tons had been built. That is, the losses had not been made up. Furthermore, as the table shows, output

(2) Lt. Cm. Calvert "Submarine Attack on Merchant Ships" 1/2/15, in Ibid.
(3) Grant, U-Boat Intelligence, p. 182-3. Two were probably sunk by their own mines, one by a Russian mine the cause of one loss is not known.
(5) Admiralty, Merchant Shipping Losses, August 1919, London, HMSO, Table A.
(6) Ibid., Table C.
(7) Ibid., Table A.
(10) Ibid.
was decreasing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>UK Merchant Shipping Output (Gross Tonnage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915, 1st quarter</td>
<td>266,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd &quot;</td>
<td>146,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd &quot;</td>
<td>145,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th &quot;</td>
<td>92,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>650,919</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus by whatever criteria that is used, the first German U-boat campaign cannot be called a failure and in giving his chapter the title of "The First Defeat of the U-boats", Churchill misleads the reader. Furthermore it is quite obvious from the literature that British counter-measures was not the reason that the campaign was reconsidered by the German government in October. The Government of the United States had protested to Germany immediately a war zone had been declared around Britain on February 18th, and stated that they would hold Germany responsible for the loss of any American lives. American protests over the sinking of the Lusitania in May 1915, in which many Americans were lost, led to restrictions being placed on U-boats captains. Finally after a stiff American note had followed the sinking of the Arabic in August 1915 U-boats were withdrawn from all northern waters except the North Sea. Thus it was American pressure and not British counter-measures which brought the campaign to an end. However it should be noted that even then Germany did not forgo the use of U-boats altogether. Rather they concentrated their attention on the Mediterranean, where there were far fewer American targets and the tables of losses show that 150,000 tons of British shipping was lost in November and December, that is after the official end of the

(4) Ibid., p. 219-227.
(5) Admiralty - Merchant Shipping Losses, Table A.
The Final Phase 1916-18

Unlike any of the other wartime chapters of *The World Crisis*, Churchill's final chapter on the U-boat war is substantially based on the work of one of his naval advisors, as the following letter makes clear. 

Churchill to Kenneth Dewar:

"I send you a very rough draft of the U-boat chapter. You will see that I have re-written your excellent account in the more highly coloured and less technical style suited to the lay reader, to whom the rudiments have to be explained. I should be so much obliged if you would make any corrections or improvements which occur to you."\(^1\)

In fact, Churchill's account of the last phase of the U-boat campaign is even briefer, for the time span covered, than his sections on the earlier campaigns. The main interest in the chapter therefore lies in a comparison between Dewar's paper and the material published by Churchill in *The World Crisis*. In making such a comparison it can be seen how Churchill changed Dewar's draft into his own more "highly coloured" prose, and what sections of it he chose for inclusion in *The World Crisis* and what material he chose to omit.\(^2\) However because of their importance his handling of the introduction of the convoy system and the failure of British defensive measures of 1916-7 will also be discussed.

The first area of comparison between Dewar's and Churchill's account of the submarine war is that of language. Dewar's autobiography ("*The Navy From Within*") and the many articles published by him reveal him as an interesting and forceful writer well able to express vividly his often highly unorthodox (for the Navy at least) ideas. No doubt it was these qualities that first recommended him to Churchill. One would not expect his account of the submarine war to be a bland narrative filled with...
statistics and tables. Nor is it. Many phrases which appear in The World Crisis and would seem to have a Churchillian origin are in fact Dewar's. Thus it was Dewar who originally wrote of the "dark doom" awaiting the Flanders U-boats, described the operations division of the Admiralty as "troubled like Martha over many things" and suggested that hunting a U-boat was like blind man's bluff in an unlimited space of three dimensions. Yet as stated in his letter to Dewar Churchill still felt the need to "improve" on Dewar's prose. He usually did this by adding even more adjectives or by making events revolve more around personalities. Several examples may be given. In writing of the effect of the increasingly efficient anti-submarine methods on the U-boats crews, Dewar said, "There is no doubt that in these circumstances the original high morale of the submarine crews was put to a terrible strain and declined rapidly during 1918. The presentiment of a sudden and awful death, the continual attacks by escort vessels, and the fear of mines, produced a state of nervous tension which was reflected in the surrender of more than one undamaged submarine and in numerous cases of boats putting back for small repairs a few days after leaving harbour." In The World Crisis this becomes:

"The unceasing presentiment of a sudden and frightful death beyond human sight or succour, the shuddering concussions of the depth charges, the continual attacks of escort vessels, the fear of annihilation at any moment from mines, the repeated hair-breadth escapes, produced a state of nervous tension in the U-boat crews. Their original high morale declined rapidly during 1918 under an intolerable strain. The surrender of more than one undamaged submarine and numerous cases of boats putting back for small repairs a few days after leaving harbour showed that even in this valiant age the limits of human endurance had been reached." Thus when Churchill's amendments are placed together, (unceasing, frightful, beyond human sight or succour, shuddering concussions of the depth charges, annihilation at any moment, repeated hair-breadth escapes, intolerable,}

(5) The World Crisis, p. 1213 and p. 1218, Churchill's major additions are underlined.
valiant, limits of human endurance) we can see that his version of events is indeed more highly coloured than Dewar's.

A further example of this type of treatment may be found in the "rival" descriptions of the Zeebrugge operation. Of that action Dewar wrote.

"The full story of that heroic action is well known. The harbour was completely blocked for about three weeks and it was dangerous for submarines for a period of two months. By dint of strenuous efforts the entrance was partially cleared, but the obstacles formed by the sunken ships prevented the full use of the port. After 23rd April no operations of any importance were carried out by the Flanders destroyers, which were seriously impeded in entering and leaving the harbour. In consequence of these measures the losses in the English Channel were reduced from about 20 to 6 a month, and the minefields laid by Flanders boats fell from 404, or 33 a month, in 1917 to 64, or 6 a month, in 1918."1

In The World Crisis we find

"The famous story of the blocking of Zeebrugge on St. George's Day by Admiral Keyes and the Dover Force cannot be repeated here. It may well rank as the finest feat of arms in the Great War, and certainly as an episode unsurpassed in the history of the Royal Navy. The harbour was completely blocked for about three weeks and was dangerous to U-boats for a period of two months. Although the Germans by strenuous efforts partially cleared the entrance after some weeks for U-boats, no operations of any importance were ever again carried out by the Flanders destroyers. The results of Admiral Keyes' command at Dover reduced the Allied losses in the English Channel from about twenty to six a month, and the minefields laid by the Flanders boats fell from thirty-three a month in 1917 to six a month in 1918. These results, which constitute a recognizable part of the general victory, were achieved notwithstanding the fact that the numbers of U-boats in commission were maintained by new building at about two hundred."2

In Churchill's account we are told, in addition to Dewar's facts, of the famous story of Keyes and Zeeburgge, which took place on St. George's day, was probably the finest feat of arms in the Great War and unsurpassed in British Naval history. Later we are reminded that the good results which flowed from the action were achieved under Admiral Keyes' command at Dover and constitute a recognizable part in general victory. Thus does Churchill emphasize the romantic, historic, adventurous and important nature of

(2) The World Crisis, p. 1212, Churchill's major additions are underlined.
Zeebrugge and at the same time leaves the reader in no doubt that it was Keyes who supplied the inspiration behind the operation.

As well as examining the differences in the language used by Dewar and Churchill it is instructive to look at the different way the same aspect of the submarine war has been treated in their respective accounts. A good example is the activities and effectiveness of Q ships. Dewar devotes just under a page to a discussion of this stratagem. He states that "Four submarines were destroyed by this method in 1915, two in 1916, and five in 1917". He adds "The system had its limitations, however, for the Q ship was frequently disabled or sunk before the submarine could be enticed into a favourable position. A vivid example of this stands out in the action between the Dunraven and U61."\(^1\) A brief description of this action follows, and Dewar concludes "The last submarine destroyed by a Q ship was U88, in September 1917, and after that the stratagem had lost its power. Submarines were taking no more risks. From first to last it had accomplished the destruction of 11 submarines with the loss of 20 decoy ships, some of them with all hands."\(^2\)

Although Churchill's section on Q ships is clearly based on Dewar's account it differs from it in several important ways. It has already been noticed that Churchill, in an earlier chapter, greatly over emphasized the importance of this anti-submarine device and he now continues this process. Firstly he states that 11 U-boats were destroyed by Q ships during 1915 and 1916\(^3\) when Dewar's account made it clear that these successes were spread over three years. He also omits the point made by Dewar that the Q-ship was often sunk before the submarine and the figures which show that almost twice as many Q-ships were sunk as submarines.\(^4\) He then makes the

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(2) Ibid.
(3) The World Crisis, p. 1196.
(4) Ibid.
assertion, certainly not supported by Dewar's paper, that it was the
activities of Q-ships that forced submarines to rely "more and more upon their
torpedoes". ¹ (In fact more important factors in instituting these changed
tactics were the different nature of the unrestricted campaign on 1917-18
and the vastly increased numbers of armed merchantmen.) Furthermore where
Dewar devotes only a few sentences to the Dunraven incident Churchill
spends 2½ pages or 1/8 of the total space on the 1917-8 submarine war in
describing this action.² Finally, where Dewar used the action to illustrate
the limitations of the Q ship method Churchill omits this point and merely
publishes the story as a stirring tale. Certainly he never draws attention
to the fact that it was the submarine which won the encounter and this
point remains buried in the narrative.

A further example of the difference in approach between Dewar and
Churchill is illustrated by their sections on convoy. Because of the
importance of convoy in combatting the German submarine campaign it is not
surprising to find Dewar devoting a great deal of attention to it. In fact
it takes about one third of his paper. This emphasis was not adopted by
Churchill. Although Churchill calls the introduction of convoy "the
decisive step" in the submarine war,³ little more space is devoted to
convoy in The World Crisis than was used to describe the Dunraven incident.
Thus much of the material on convoy supplied by Dewar was omitted from
Churchill's account. In this category fall tables of convoy losses, the
escort problem, troop convoys, convoy in the Mediterranean and Scandinavian
convoys.⁴ Yet these were all important subjects and certainly more worthy
of inclusion in a general survey than Churchill's relatively trivial Q ship
material. However, Churchill obviously felt that his readers required

¹ The World Crisis, p. 1196.
² Ibid., p. 1196-8, Dewar supplied Churchill with a book from which
Churchill took his account. Dewar to Marsh 11/11/26, Churchill Papers
8/187.
³ The World Crisis, p. 1203.
⁴ Churchill Papers 8/187.
occasional stirring tales to hold their interest rather than an undramatic narration of convoy facts and figures and after reading both Churchill and Dewar the impression remains that Dewar has struck the more correct balance.

The way in which Churchill decided to adapt Dewar's section on convoy has one curious feature. The controversy surrounding the introduction of convoy and the question of whether the Admirals or the politicians took the initiative is well known. Here it seems would be an ideal opportunity for Churchill to mount another attack on Admiralty inactivity, especially as Jellicoe was the main figure concerned. Furthermore as the imposition of convoy upon the reluctant Admirals was widely held to be one of Lloyd George's major contributions to victory, it might have been expected that Churchill would emphasize his leaders decisive role. In fact neither of these expectations wholly comes to pass. While making it quite clear that he considers the Admirals responsible for the tardy introduction of convoy, Churchill also lists the difficulties which led to their hesitations. Moreover his narrative does not revolve around the criticism of personalities and Jellicoe's name is not mentioned at all. Finally Lloyd George's contribution is dismissed in one sentence, Churchill merely saying "The trial of the convoy system was urged upon the naval authorities by the Cabinet, and in this the Prime Minister took a decisive part." Yet some years later Churchill wrote an article on convoy in which he described at length and in sarcastic tones the victory of the "amateur politicians" over "the competent, trained, experienced experts at the Admiralty", clearly identified Jellicoe as the main villain and set down in detail the famous visit of Lloyd George to the Admiralty. How is this difference in approach to be explained? One possible explanation is that the two pieces on convoy were written by Churchill under different guises, the first by Churchill the historian, the second by Churchill the journalist. Thus in The World Crisis

(1) The World Crisis, p. 1207.
Churchill adopts a more sober approach, eschews personalities, and while coming down on the side of the politicians, is careful to consider the difficulties facing the Admiralty. In the article (originally published in the Daily Telegraph) he feels able to adopt a more partisan approach no doubt more in keeping with the readership of a popular journal. However, there is another explanation less flattering to Churchill. It is possible that Churchill avoided criticizing (or praising) individuals in his section on convoy because of his own noticeable absence from the ranks of those advocating this solution. Alternatively perhaps Churchill's lack of involvement at the time with the convoy issue led to him showing a certain lack of interest in the subject when writing The World Crisis and under these conditions he was quite willing to follow Dewar's account without embellishment.

On one occasion material supplied by Dewar seems to have been omitted by Churchill in order to defend his wartime administration. In The World Crisis Churchill includes a table supplied by Dewar on the defensive arming of merchant ships. However Churchill omitted a sentence by Dewar which said "Defensive armaments proved a deterrent to the enemy and an encouragement to the mercantile marine, but the provision of guns was slow and it was not until the latter part of 1916 that special efforts were made to arm the whole of the mercantile marine." The implication of this statement is that little was done under Churchill's administration to arm merchant ships and indeed only 766 were armed by December 1915 and this is no doubt why Dewar's comment was not included in The World Crisis.

Thus Churchill's need to tell a more "colourful" story than Dewar has led him to produce a slightly less balanced account. However most of the

(1) Daily Telegraph Nov. 16, 18, 23, 25, 1931.
(2) The World Crisis, p. 1199.
elements which made up the final submarine campaign are present in *The World Crisis* and the factual material provided by Dewar and included by Churchill can hardly be faulted. Churchill of course never reveals that the chapter was largely ghost-written by Dewar but no doubt Dewar, like Edmonds concerning the Somme material, would not have wanted this fact to be made public.

In conclusion it is obvious that Churchill has treated the submarine war in a fairly superficial way. He devotes less space to the campaign, which lasted from 1914 to 1918 and which had a large influence on the final result, than he does to Jutland which lasted only a few hours and the result of which hardly effected the course of the war. Clearly battles attracted Churchill more than the economic and organizational problems which lay at the heart of the U-boat war and it is noteworthy that he spends a good deal of space in describing the closest thing to battles in the campaign, the encounters between U-boats and Q ships. Churchill shows more interest in defending his own record over submarines but the feeling persists that an attempt to probe this record too deeply would have led to an admission that the defensive measures which he claimed were so successful in 1915 were proved by the subsequent German campaigns to be utter failures. Perhaps this lack of a convincing self-justificatory tale led to Churchill's apparent lack of interest in the U-boat war and explains why the later campaign was described in such sketchy terms in *The World Crisis*. Whatever the explanation is is clear from the U-boat chapters that uncharacteristically, Churchill's involvement with his subject is lacking.
THE WRITING OF THE WORLD CRISIS 1916-18

It has already been suggested in an introduction to this section that a more interesting approach to the third volume of *The World Crisis* than to embark on a detailed analysis of the events described would be to attempt an essay on the way in which Churchill wrote his last volume. The method adopted is to examine the major contributions made to the book by the more important of Churchill's advisers and then to attempt an overall assessment of their influence on this section of *The World Crisis*.

One of the first to read the draft chapters of volume three of *The World Crisis* was Lord Beaverbrook. His contributions to the earlier volumes have already been noted. After reading the proofs he commented to Churchill, "My principal general criticism is that there is no home politics whatever in this volume." He also considered that Churchill had not adequately recognized the contribution made by Lloyd George to the final victory.

Churchill's initial reason for omitting domestic politics from his book is not hard to find. During this period of the war he was excluded from high office (as Minister of Munitions he was not in the Cabinet) and he took no part in the manoeuvrings which preceded the main political event of the period, the replacement of Asquith as Prime Minister by Lloyd George. However, perhaps as a result of Beaverbrook's criticism, a chapter entitled "A Political Interlude" was eventually included. It deals in rather summary fashion with the defects of the coalition government from May 1915, the conscription issue, the power of the press in wartime and the formation of the Lloyd George coalition. As usual Churchill adds a personal note by including a discussion of his secret session speech of May 10th 1917 which, he claims, was instrumental in Lloyd George's decision to include him in the government in July. (It is interesting to note that Churchill originally described the first coalition government under Asquith as being "composed

(1) Beaverbrook to Churchill 23/11/26, Churchill Papers,8/204.
(2) Ibid.
(3) *The World Crisis*, p.1098-1116.
of a large number of eminent and upright men of the highest patriotism and individual ability. In the published version of the chapter, "of the highest patriotism and individual ability" was omitted, eminent and upright being thought by Churchill to be praise enough for colleagues of whose "individual abilities" he did not appear to be entirely convinced at the time.)

Churchill also tried to meet Beaverbrook's argument about Lloyd George. "L.G. I have added a short passage of appreciation at the end of "A Political Interlude" which I trust will repair the deficiency you notice." This appreciation of Lloyd George can be read on p.1115-6 of The World Crisis. However a section of it owes more to Hankey, who was also assisting Churchill at this point, than to Churchill. In a letter to Churchill Hankey detailed some of the qualities of Lloyd George.

"For example, his habit of snatching advantage out of disaster always strikes me as one of his outstanding merits. Thus, out of the terrible losses from submarines in the Spring of 1917 he obtained the adoption of the convoy system (for which however I think you have given him credit). From the disaster of Caporetto he secured the establishment of the Supreme War Council. From the disaster of March 21st he secured the unified command." This should be compared with the following passage from The World Crisis:

"Mr. Lloyd George in this period seemed to have a peculiar power of drawing from misfortune itself the means of future success. From the U-boat depredations he obtained the convoy system: out of the disaster of Caporetto he extracted the Supreme War Council: from the catastrophe of the 21st of March he drew the Unified Command and the immense American reinforcement."

This is a good example of how Churchill could benefit from the ideas of others and then rewrite them in his own prose.

Beaverbrook however was still not satisfied that Churchill had treated Lloyd George generously enough. Indeed, the chapters of The World Crisis on the Nivelle offensive, Passchendaele and the build-up to the German Spring offensive of 1918 contain many references unflattering to the Prime Minister. Churchill speaks of Lloyd George's "facile acceptance of the Nivelle schemes",

(1) Churchill Papers, 8/101.
(2) Churchill to Beaverbrook 27/11/26, Churchill Papers, 8/204.
(3) Hankey to Churchill 8/12/26, in Ibid.
(4) See The World Crisis, p.1115-6.
laments his weakness in agreeing to the prolongation of Passchendaele and clearly disagrees with the policy which left the British Army under strength through the winter of 1917-18. He was not prepared to alter these judgments. He wrote to Beaverbrook,

"I am grieved that the story should produce the impression on your mind of hostility to L.G. I think now, as I said then, that he was utterly wrong about Nivelle, about not stopping Passchendaele and about not reinforcing the army in the winter of 1918. He would have had far more authority over G.H.Q. if he had not chopped and changed so much about offensives in the west. Every three or four months he was in a new mood. They at any rate were consistent in always wanting to attack. I was consistent in always trying to stop them. L.G. figures on both sides of the account with a contradiction which history is bound to note, because all the documents exist. In the upshot he was always wrong. He encouraged the Nivelle offensive which ended in disaster. He discouraged the final advance in 1918 which ended in success. He gave way about the prolongation of Passchendaele against a true conviction. Still there is no doubt that he was much better as No. 1 than anybody else. The same may be said of Haig. The truth is that armageddon was quite beyond the compass of anybody, even including you and me."  

Thus, although Churchill was prepared to include sections in The World Crisis praising Lloyd George, he was not prepared to remove the criticisms. Lloyd George is therefore handled in a much more direct way than was noticed in volume 1 where several unflattering references to the then Chancellor of the Exchequer were carefully removed. But in 1921 and 1922 when volume 1 was written Churchill and Lloyd George were colleagues in government, Churchill being the junior partner. By 1926 they were no longer colleagues. Nor were they likely to be aligned politically in the future and this fact may have led Churchill to reject further attempts by Beaverbrook to alter The World Crisis in Lloyd George's favour.

On a separate occasion Beaverbrook complained of Churchill's treatment of Bonar Law. Churchill amended his account and Beaverbrook replied, "I do not see any objection whatever to the text as amended. I am sure it gives a fair impression of Bonar Law." Unfortunately the material omitted by Churchill cannot be identified. It could not have been concerned with events

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(1) The World Crisis, p.1136, 1178 and 1181-2, 1220-27.
(2) Churchill to Beaverbrook 30/11/26, Churchill Papers, 8/204.
(3) Beaverbrook to Churchill 24/10/26, in Ibid. 8/203.
described in "A Political Interlude" for that chapter was only included later. Yet there are no other references to Bonar Law in volume three. Perhaps Churchill transferred the omitted material to a later chapter in which Bonar Law appears in a not unfriendly light. ¹

A further suggestion by Beaverbrook was taken up by Churchill. After reading the chapter entitled "The 21-st of March" Beaverbrook complained that Churchill had omitted all mention of the Maurice debate. ² This debate took place in the House of Commons after Lloyd George had been publicly accused by General Maurice of falsifying figures on the strength of the British Army in March 1918. In the course of the debate Lloyd George produced figures which he claimed came from Maurice's own department at the War Office and which supported the Prime Minister's previous assertions that the army in France was stronger in March 1918 than it had been a year before. Churchill was obviously aware that the army had been kept understrength and that Lloyd George's figures were fraudulent. Probably he took Beaverbrook's advice and included a paragraph on the subject in his book, making sure that the paragraph was constructed to avoid a pronouncement on the accuracy of the rival sets of figures. The relevant section reads, "the Prime Minister convinced the House that his statement had been founded on information supplied in writing by General Maurice's Deputy. This was decisive on the issue, and the actual merits of the controversy were scarcely discussed."³ The whole section was then sent to the General for his comments but Maurice was not satisfied with Churchill's account. (He would have been even less satisfied had not Eddie Marsh, Churchill's secretary, noticed that Churchill had included a sentence claiming that Maurice's indignation at the removal of Robertson had provided the impulse for his attack on Lloyd George. This sentence was hastily removed.)⁴ In replying to Churchill Maurice reaffirmed the accuracy of his figures, stated that no figures had ever been supplied to

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¹ The World Crisis, p.1140.
² Churchill to Beaverbrook 27/11/26, Churchill Papers, 8/204.
³ The World Crisis, p.1260.
⁴ Marsh to Churchill 6/1/27, Churchill Papers, 8/208.
Lloyd George by his department, and claimed that the troop strengths used by Lloyd George were inflated by the inclusion of British troops in Italy. He also noticed that Churchill was hedging on the issue of who had been correct and commented, "It would be quite true to say that 'L.G. convinced the house that the figures he had used had been supplied to him by General Maurice's department' but it would be somewhat disingenuous to convey the impression that the conviction was correct." However, although Churchill was quite prepared to criticize Lloyd George in The World Crisis he was certainly not prepared to say that he was a liar and he had no intention of pronouncing between Maurice and the Prime Minister. As a result his "disingenuous" account remained.

Despite the criticisms of Beaverbrook about the political aspects of The World Crisis it was the final military chapters which gave Churchill the most trouble in the construction of volume three. Although Edmonds continued to supply him with material and documents, Churchill felt the lack of advice from a serving officer, a military equivalent of Keyes, who had read all the naval chapters. The problem was that Churchill was hardly persona grata with a considerable section of the army who were well aware of his opinion of their capabilities. Also Sir Henry Wilson, who would have been a possible candidate, was dead. Churchill then hit upon the startling idea of approaching Sir Douglas Haig for help on his military chapters. Churchill had established good relations between himself and the Commander-in-Chief during Churchill's period as Minister of Munitions. Haig had been particularly impressed at the way in which losses in material caused by the German spring offensive had been promptly replaced by Churchill's Ministry. After the war the friendly relations had been maintained and Haig had been sent a presentation copy of volume 1 of The World Crisis. Nevertheless the

(1) Maurice to Marsh 21/1/27, Churchill Papers, 8/208.
(2) Maurice to Marsh 21/1/27, in Ibid.
(3) Haig Diary 27/4/18, Blake, p.306.
(4) Churchill Papers, 8/195.
possibility of literary collaboration between the two men must have seemed fairly unlikely. Even a cursory reading of The World Crisis reveals Churchill's hostility to the policy adopted by G.H.Q. in France from 1915 onwards. Such statements as "if only the Generals had not been content to fight machine-gun bullets with the breasts of gallant men, and think that that was waging war"¹ can hardly have endeared Churchill to Haig. However, the need to ask Haig's permission to quote from conversations between Churchill and the Commander-in-Chief led Churchill to include the chapters in which they were contained for Haig's comments. Churchill's letter continued,

"The four chapters in which they [the conversations] occur may perhaps interest you, and I dare say you will not be discontented with them.....On the other hand as you may perhaps remember, I was a convinced and outspoken opponent of our offensive policy at Loos, on the Somme and at Passchendaele, and the argument of the book turns strongly against it. Therefore, in considering whether you care to allow these personal quotations to appear in the latter part you ought to bear in mind the criticisms of the earlier years which are also included in the work. I need scarcely say that these criticisms are expressed in terms appropriate to the pleasant personal relations which have for so many years and in such varied circumstances existed between us."²

Haig responded positively to Churchill. He was apparently willing to balance the criticisms of Part 1 of volume three with the praise bestowed in Part II. He not only gave Churchill permission to quote from the conversations but sent him some extracts from his diary to show what he thought to be the facts at the time. He also added, "It has been a very great pleasure to read your very brilliant account of those anxious weeks."³ Churchill was delighted with Haig's reply. "You take, if you will permit me to say so, a broad-minded view about criticisms, as is right in regard to matters which belong to history and will for generations be argued about."⁴ He thanked Haig for his criticisms of the four chapters and included more for Haig's perusal and he also asked permission to reproduce Haig's famous "backs to the wall" message in facsimile.⁵ This was duly given and the reproduction

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¹ The World Crisis, p.1190.
² Churchill to Haig 20/11/26, Churchill Papers, 8/204.
³ Haig to Churchill 1/12/26, in Ibid.
⁴ Churchill to Haig 6/12/26, in Ibid.
⁵ Ibid.
appears on p.1273. From this point on, the unlikely partnership between Churchill and Haig developed. Haig read most of the chapters of volume three of The World Crisis from the Nivelle Offensive on, and as will be shown made a considerable contribution to the book. At the end of their collaboration Haig wrote,

"The book will have an honoured position in my library here, and I feel sure that I shall read all you have written with the greatest pleasure, as I have already greatly enjoyed reading the extracts from which have appeared in the 'Times'. In order to enjoy reading your writings it is not, I find, necessary to agree with all the opinions which you express. And as for criticisms of what I did or did not do, no one knows as well as I do how far short of the ideal my own conduct both of the 1st Corps & 1st Army was, as well as of the B.E.F. when C in C. But I do take credit for this, that it was due to the decisions which I took in August and Septr 1918 that the war ended in Nov....I hope that if you ever happen to be in this neighbourhood, or passing through that you will arrange to spend a day or two with us."\(^2\)

As will be shown the line suggested by Haig, that he was largely responsible for the decision to press for decisive action in 1918, was the line adopted by Churchill in The World Crisis. It is then indeed ironic that Churchill, usually regarded as the bête noir of G.H.Q. and the scourge of the "westerners" should enlist the willing cooperation of the arch westerner in writing The World Crisis. Surely this is one of the strangest secrets that the Churchill Papers have to reveal.

Of course the adoption of a more pro-Haig line by Churchill produced trouble for him with some of his other advisers who were usually to be found in the other camp. Beaverbrook considered that "On both Jellicoe and Haig you give the impression of hedging, [it is hard to see how Churchill could be accused of hedging on Jellicoe?] though no doubt the historian of the future, reading between the lines will see clearly enough what you really thought of them."\(^3\)

Churchill was quick to correct Beaverbrook's assumptions, though his reply is much more appropriate to the view of Haig given in The World Crisis.

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(1) Haig to Churchill 15/12/26, in Ibid. Haig's only condition was that 100 extra copies be duplicated by the printer for him to autograph to raise funds for ex-servicemen.
(2) Haig to Churchill 15/3/27, Churchill Papers, 8/211.
(3) Beaverbrook to Churchill 22/11/26, In Ibid. 8/204.
than to that of Jellicoe.

"There is no doubt that both Jellicoe and Haig were absolutely at the top of their professions from every point of view; and apart from the erroneous doctrines which led one to fight as little, and the other as much, as possible, they played worthy parts and rendered great services and bore a noteworthy share in the eventual success. Therefore it would not be just, apart from other considerations, to frame a harsh partisan indictment and omit all recognition of the other side. I do not seek to condemn individuals, but to establish certain impersonal views upon the war by sea and land. If I can do this satisfactorily while avoiding recriminations, I am quite content. As a matter of fact my subsequent study of the war has led me to think a good deal better of Haig than I did at the time. It is absolutely certain there was no one who could have taken his place."

It is interesting to note that Churchill thought he had avoided giving a "harsh indictment" of Jellicoe in The World Crisis. Concerning Haig, it is hard to judge if Churchill's modified view of the Commander-in-Chief came about as a result of their collaboration or was the initial cause of it. Whatever the reason Churchill's portrait of Haig contains elements of balance lacking in his treatment of Jellicoe. Perhaps The World Crisis would have benefited had Jellicoe read the Jutland chapters in draft.

The results of the Haig-Churchill partnership must now be examined in more detail. Only the more important of the changes suggested by Haig will be included here. Those interested in the remainder of Haig's contributions should consult Appendix 2.

In his criticisms of the later chapters of The World Crisis Haig consistently showed concern over the picture given by Churchill of the relationship between himself and the leading French Generals and the relative contributions made by the British and French Armies to the final battles. Haig seemed concerned to show that while his personal relations with Nivelle, Foch and Pétain were always good, and while he was always willing to accede to any reasonable French request, he firmly rejected unreasonable interferences and at all times maintained the independence of the British Army.

The first of Haig's suggested amendments to The World Crisis in this area can be seen in relation to the Nivelle offensive in the spring of 1917. Nivelle had requested that the British launch a preparatory attack near Arras

(1) Churchill to Beaverbrook 23/11/26, Churchill Papers, 8/204.
and Churchill had originally written of this, "Haig met the request of General Nivelle by a statement of his difficulties and burdens. He had hoped to be allowed to mass his reserves for an offensive on the Belgian coast - an earlier and more propitious Passchendaele."¹ On Haig's suggestion this was changed to read,

"Haig was not unwilling to meet the wishes of the French Command. He was in favour of renewing the offensive in France and was ready to fall in with Nivelle's views as to its direction and scope. Moreover, when the French wished to assume the brunt of the new attack and asked for assistance for this purpose, it was hardly for the British to refuse. On December 25 therefore Haig wrote to Nivelle, 'I agree in principle with your proposals and am desirous of doing all I can to help you on the lines you suggest.'"²

Of the two versions, Haig's as used by Churchill in The World Crisis seems to be more accurate. There is no evidence to suggest that Haig put forward his northern plan as an alternative to Nivelle's offensive. However, Haig was preparing for an earlier Passchendaele³ and as a result of his amendments this fact was not included in The World Crisis.

Thus Haig was anxious to show that he was willing to cooperate with Nivelle. On the other hand he was also anxious to show that the plan, which placed the British Army under Nivelle for the duration of the offensive, had not originated with him. He therefore supplied Churchill with a narrative of the Calais Conference at which this decision was made. Whether Churchill had an earlier version of this event is not known but the influence of Haig's account becomes apparent when it is compared with that which appears in The World Crisis. Haig wrote,

"During Jan...Traffic difficulties had become so acute that a break down of the Nord System appeared probable. I referred this matter home and another conference was ordered - This time at Calais on 26th and 27th February 1917. Transportation was not discussed, but Nivelle's operations were! Then the French produced a detailed scheme of organisation for an Allied G.H.Q. in France - This provided for a French Generalissimo, and H.Q. Staff of French & Brit. officers with a British C in S. The British C in C was to be retained but only in name to do A.C's work but to have nothing to do with operations. This proposal was pronounced to be unworkable, but an agreement was drawn up placing the control of the forthcoming operations solely in Nivelle's hands, and the British Army under his orders."⁴

(1) Churchill Papers, 8/161.
(2) Ibid. See The World Crisis, p.1123-4.
(3) Haig to Nivelle 6/1/17, Blake p.190-1.
(4) Churchill Papers, 8/161.
Churchill's version in The World Crisis reads,

"During January the inadequacy of the rolling stock on the Nord railway became so marked that after strenuous British protests another conference was convened at Calais on February 26. The French produced a detailed scheme of organization for an allied G.H.Q. in France. This provided for a French Generalissimo with a Headquarters Staff of French and British Officers under a British Chief of Staff. A British Commander-in-Chief was to be retained in name for Adjutant-General's work, but without influence upon operations. The immediate resistance of the British Generals led to this proposal being put aside, and instead an agreement was drawn up placing the control of the forthcoming operations solely in Nivelle's hands and the British Army under his orders for that period." ¹

The next of Haig's important comments on the subject of Anglo-French relations came in a chapter of Churchill's entitled "The Turn of the Tide". This chapter is concerned in part with the accumulation of reserves by Foch for the French counter-attack of July 1918. To free French divisions for the battle, Foch wanted Haig to move British divisions into the French Zone. Of this request Churchill originally wrote, "[Foch] also on the 12th and 13th demanded four British divisions from Haig to be followed when necessary by four more".² Haig apparently objected to the word "demanded" which implied that he had been reluctant to part with his divisions. To remove this impression he wrote an expanded version of this incident for Churchill.

"He [Foch] therefore asked for four British Divisions to be moved, two south of the Somme and two astride that river to ensure the connection between the French and British armies about Amiens and to enable him to move four French divisions farther east on to his right flank. This was agreed to and the orders were issued by telephone on the spot by General Lawrence... Next day,... Foch sent [a] message to G.H.Q. that the situation demanded that the four British Divns, already asked for should be placed 'unreservedly at his disposal for employment with the French Army and that four more Divisions should be despatched to take their place.'"³

Churchill's amended version reads,

"He [Foch] also on the 12th asked that four British divisions should be moved into the French zone, two south of the Somme and two astride of that river to ensure the connection between the French and British armies about Amiens, and to enable him to move four French divisions farther to the east and nearer to the impending battle. This was agreed to by the British Headquarters and orders were given accordingly. On the 13th Foch demanded that these four divisions should be immediately placed unreservedly at his disposal for the battle, and further that four / British divisions should be despatched to take their places."⁴

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¹ The World Crisis, p.1125.
² Churchill Papers, 8/171.
³ Ibid.
⁴ The World Crisis, p.1325-6.
Of the sequel to this event Churchill's account originally had Haig moving two of the additional divisions requested but refusing to despatch the remaining two and finally, after a conference with Foch, "submitting" to their removal. However, Haig suggested that Churchill make it clear that there was no point blank refusal on the British side but a request that a decision be deferred until Haig could meet Foch to discuss this point. A sentence to this effect was added to The World Crisis. Haig also objected to the word "submitted" and Churchill changed this in the text to "agreed".

In relation to this incident Churchill had written of Foch before the battle, "He is fighting two battles already behind the front: one to clear his counter-stroke troops from Petain's reserves; the other to coax four - and it must be eight - divisions from Field-Marshal Haig. He has yet a third battle to fight behind the line." In the light of Haig's comments Churchill could hardly maintain this line and eventually he merely said of Foch, "He has battles to fight behind the line as well as in front of it."

Thus far Haig was mainly concerned to show that he was always anxious to help the French where possible. From the battle of Amiens on, however, he clearly saw it as his major task to ensure that Churchill did not under-rate the contribution made by the British Army (and of course Haig) to final victory. In fact there had been a slight tendency on Churchill's part to emphasize the French contribution but, after Haig's comments, the "balance" was restored. For example, in continuing the narrative of the battle of Amiens Churchill wrote, "The victory of August 8 was no sooner ended and the German front stabilized than Foch wished to renew the attack." After Haig's comments this read, "The victory of August 8 was no sooner ended, than both Foch and Haig sought to renew the attack."

(1) Churchill Papers, 8/171.
(2) Ibid.
(3) The last sentence of the first paragraph on p.1326.
(4) Churchill Papers, 8/171.
(5) The World Crisis, p.1329.
(6) Churchill Papers, 8/171.
(7) The World Crisis, p.1327.
(8) Churchill Papers, 8/172.
(9) The World Crisis, p.1340, emphasis added
Churchill next chronicles the difference of opinion which arose between Haig and Foch over the renewal of the Amiens battle. Originally he had made no final pronouncement between the plans of the two commanders and had included the following sentence; "Relations between the two Generals became decidedly strained And this time it was Foch who submitted."\(^1\) After receiving Haig's notes Churchill deleted this sentence and added the following to ensure that readers grasped the superiority of Haig's strategy. "In short, Foch called for a continuance of the frontal attack south of the Somme, and Haig insisted on opening a new and wider battle to the north (on the front Monchy-le-Preux-Miraumont). The difference between the two plans was fundamental."\(^2\) (In fact it appears that the credit for insisting that the Amiens front be shut down and the attack transferred elsewhere belongs to Rawlinson who first convinced Haig of the soundness of the strategy).

Haig continued to be concerned that the role of the British Army (and himself) in the last months of the war would not be appreciated by Churchill and he wrote a general note on the subject for Churchill's guidance.

"The attacks by the British Army were regulated by me. Foch's order was to drive back Germans so as to clear Longueux Railway Centre and main line from Amiens to Paris. It was I who decided to bring in the 3rd Army [Byng] on the left of Rawlinson contrary to Foch's orders [for the August 21st Battle]. It was also I who planned to bring Horne (1st Army) in to the Battle (with the Canadian attack on Monchy Le Preux and Drocaut-Queant lines) on the left of Byng. Foch had nothing to do with that strategy - His strategy consisted in saying & making the French Army act on his saying 'Tout le monde a la bataille'... He got the best out of the French Troops & without Foch they would have given in."\(^3\)

After receiving this note Churchill completely re-wrote his paragraph on the rival strategies after Amiens while retaining the changes already referred to above. The result can be seen on p.1340-1. It follows closely the lines suggested by Haig. The tribute paid to Haig and the British Army later in the chapter may also have been added as a result of Haig's comments.\(^4\)

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(1) Churchill Papers, 8/172. Earlier concerning a conference between Foch and Haig on April 14 Churchill had spoken of "very sharp differences" between the two men. Haig commented, "I think this expression is too strong" and "painful" was substituted for "very sharp". See Churchill Papers, 8/168 and The World Crisis, p.1274.

(2) The World Crisis, p.1341.

(3) Churchill Papers, 8/172.

(4) The World Crisis, p.1343.
A further major concern of Haig's was the relationship between G.H.Q. and the British Government and he was careful to scrutinize closely Churchill's handling of this topic. Haig's first comments in this area concerned Churchill's discussion on the failure of Lloyd George to supply Haig with reinforcements during the winter of 1917-18.

Originally Churchill had been fairly sympathetic to Lloyd George. He initially wrote, "To meet the German onslaught when it came - if it came - everything must be thrown in: but the Prime Minister feared lest our last resources should be expended in another Passchendaele", and then continued, "That this was no idle fear is shown by the following remarkable passage in Colonel Boraston's account." He had then inserted a quotation from Boraston's book to the effect that a defensive policy had only been adopted by G.H.Q. because their divisions were under strength. Churchill had then concluded, "All this written long after the event, and with full knowledge of the Commander-in-Chief's mind, justifies the fears of the War Cabinet that the sending of large additional reinforcements would only have led to their improvident consumption before the German offensive fell upon us." Haig was unhappy with this section. He protested to Churchill that "I am not responsible either for facts or opinions expressed in this Book! .... Boraston wrote the communiques at G.H.Q. and did that work extremely well. He occasionally came to dinner - It was not until I became C in C in London that he joined my Staff as Priv Sec in 1919." Churchill then removed the whole passage, including the quotation from Boraston. The line eventually taken in The World Crisis was that the responsibility for the weakness of the British front lay with the Government for withholding troops but that Haig had contributed to this situation by the prolongation of Passchendaele. However, Boraston was closer to the mark than is implied by Haig's comments.

(1) The World Crisis, p.1220-1.
(2) Churchill Papers, 8/166.
(4) Churchill Papers, 8/166
(5) Ibid.
(6) The World Crisis, p.1260
On January 7th 1918 Haig noted in his diary that he considered that the Germans would attack in the west in the Spring and that "In my opinion, the best defence would be to continue our offensive in Flanders, because we would then retain the initiative and attract the German Reserves against us." Whether Haig would have carried out this policy had he been reinforced is another matter but, given his past performance, Lloyd George's fears do seem to have been justified.

In connection with this incident the influence of another of Churchill's advisers is relevant.

Originally Churchill had put forward a second explanation to excuse the War Cabinet's failure to provide reinforcements for Haig. In an earlier draft of The World Crisis he had written, "There is no doubt that the War Cabinet, in January and February, did not at all realize the dangers which were rapidly gathering and increasing on the British front." However, Hankey informed Churchill that this was not the case and as a result Churchill completely reversed his position and wrote, "They [the War Cabinet] were fully informed of the growing German concentration against Haig, and repeatedly discussed it."

Haig's second intervention in a section of The World Crisis concerning the British Government came in Churchill's description of the Battle of Arras. On two occasions Churchill had originally inserted that the British High Command had unnecessarily prolonged this battle, suffering heavy casualties as a result. Haig protested that Lloyd George had urged that "Arras" be continued and he produced operational telegrams showing that in any case he had ordered the attacks to be of a strictly limited nature. He also supplied some notes on the battle which Churchill seems to have substituted for his first paragraph critical of G.H.Q., (though with changed wording.)

(1) Haig Diary 7/1/18, quoted Blake p.278.
(2) Churchill Papers, 8/204.
(3) Hankey to Churchill 8/12/26, Churchill Papers, 8/204.
(4) The World Crisis, p.1228.
(5) Churchill Papers, 8/161. These statements originally were on p.1136 (second paragraph and after the last paragraph on p.1139).
(6) Churchill Papers, 8/161.
(7) Ibid. The second paragraph was omitted altogether.
The following statement almost certainly originated with Haig. "Haig had originally intended to close these operations [to the east of Arras] after the capture of Monchy-le-Preux and to begin as soon as possible the attempt to clear the coastal sector by the capture of the Messines and Passchendaele ridges. But the conditions prevailing in the French Army and in Paris were such that it was thought dangerous to relax even for a few weeks the pressure upon the enemy."¹

Thus, in the changed version Churchill exonerates Haig and at the same time avoids mentioning Lloyd George. There seems little doubt that Churchill's original version was too harsh on the British High Command and that Lloyd George was in full agreement with the continuation of the offensive.² However, the version adopted is too favourable to Haig. It is true that by the end of April he believed that preparations for Passchendaele should commence but there is no evidence that he saw the closure of the Arras offensive as a prerequisite. Indeed he wrote in his diary, "pressure on the German Army must not be relaxed in the meantime."³ Furthermore, it is clear that the reason for maintaining pressure at Arras had more to do with "wearing down" the German army in preparation for Passchendaele than with helping the French for in May he wrote, "the enemy must be worn out before a decisive attack is launched."⁴ The drawback was that the wearing down process cost 140,000 British casualties and only inflicted 86,000 on the Germans.⁵

That Haig did not always disagree with the way in which Churchill handled military-political relations is shown by his comments on Churchill's section on the dismissal of Sir William Robertson as C.I.G.S. by Lloyd George. After reading Churchill's narrative Haig replied,

(1) The World Crisis, p.1136.
(2) Hankey Diary 4/5/17, Hankey Papers, 1/1.
(3) Haig to Robertson 29/4/17, quoted Blake p.222.
(5) Military Effort, p.361.
"I think your account of Robertson's quarrel with the P.M. very fair. Derby sent for me to come to London 2 or 3 times on the question, and I have several letters on the subject. But I think you put the case so well that I have not bothered you with any notes on the main quarrel - only a line or two in the margin to say that it was not a matter on which the C in C shd resign during a Great War. I was not personally involved."1

Haig's remarks on his attitude to resignation were incorporated in the text by Churchill.2 A further comment by Haig shows that he was anxious that Churchill accurately represent the relationship between the Prime Minister and the Commander-in-Chief. Churchill had originally written, "The principles of military duty on which Sir Douglas Haig invariably proceeded prevented him, even at the time of acute personal tension with the Prime Minister from adding his own resignation to the dismissal of the Chief of the General Staff."3 Haig's marginal comments referred to above said, "There was no personal tension on my part. I visited him at his home at Walton Heath & discussed the Robertson question calmly & logically!"4 In the passage quoted above Churchill therefore substituted "tension with the Government" for "tension with the Prime Minister".5

A matter which certainly did cause tension between Lloyd George and Haig was the creation of the Supreme War Committee to oversee the strategy of the Allies and their recommendation that a general reserve of French and British divisions be created behind the Western front to meet the coming (Spring 1918) German offensive. This plan was expanded by Lloyd George and opposed by Haig. In The World Crisis Churchill had initially been inclined to side with the politicians against G.H.Q., again using Boraston's account as a basis for his criticism.

(1) Haig to Churchill 15/12/26, Churchill Papers, 8/204.
(2) The World Crisis, p.1230-1.
(3) Churchill Papers, 8/166.
(4) Ibid.
(5) The World Crisis, p. 1230.
"His [Haig's] Staff Officer [Boraston] in his account is scornful of the idea of an "Executive Committee" doling out reserves on to a moving battlefield such as existed during the retreat of March 21st. Now that the commanding genius of Marshal Foch belongs to history, we can say with certainty that thirty divisions in his hands would have brought a far more timely, abundant and skilful succour to the last heroic struggles of the Fifth Army than was ever derived from the arrangements of mutual assistance made between Haig and Petain. Sir Douglas Haig however preferred to trust to these arrangements, though they appeared both exiguous and complicated, and though they proved, when required, almost entirely illusory."1

However, following Haig's comments a more pro-Haig, and it must be said accurate statement, was substituted.

"There is no doubt that had this plan [for a general reserve] been put immediately into execution, and had Foch been armed with thirty divisions specifically assigned to the support of whatever part of the front was attacked, larger resources would have been secured to Haig in his approaching hour of supreme need. Haig did not however welcome the proposal. He declared that he had no divisions to spare for the general reserve, and that there were not even enough for the various army fronts. In such circumstances the earmarking of particular British divisions for service elsewhere could have been little more than a formality. None could have been taken from him unless the attack fell elsewhere."2

With Haig as Churchill's chief adviser it was inevitable that Edmonds should play a lesser role in these final chapters. However, he continued to be an important source of information for Churchill, supplying him with the records of the Doullens Conference, German operation orders for March 1918, 3 an account of the Lys offensive and of the French Advance (August to November). 4 He also wrote a small section which Churchill used virtually unchanged, on British Intelligence reports of the impending German withdrawal in March 1917. 5 Edmonds' comments were usually confined to general remarks such as stating that "The Climax" chapter is magnificent. 6 or that "The Teutonic Collapse" is a very fine chapter."7 In fact, the only substantial remarks made by Edmonds were ignored by Churchill. In a chapter on military policy in late 1917, Churchill had suggested that a landing by six divisions taken from Salonika, should have been made behind the Turkish lines in

1 Churchill Papers, 8/166.
2 The World Crisis, p.1229.
3 Edmonds to Churchill 20/7/26, Churchill Papers, 8/203.
4 Churchill Papers, 8/190.
5 Ibid. 8/189. The paragraph beginning "The retrograde movement" on p.1126.
6 Edmonds to Churchill 2/9/26, Ibid. 8/203.
7 Edmonds to Churchill 19/10/26, Ibid. 8/190.
Palestine, in conjunction with an assault by Allenby's army. Edmonds commented that Churchill's strategy ignored the fact that during this period Allenby had to spend a considerable time in re-organizing this army and that, because of this, he "would hardly have been ready to make a landing earlier than he made his final attack, and he attained his ends probably more swiftly and cheaply than a landing would have done for him." However, it would have taken more than Edmonds to deflect Churchill from the idea of amphibious operations in the East and the section remained unaltered.

Probably Edmonds' major contribution to these chapters was to supply on request examples of "good fights" on March 21st 1918. Churchill incorporated the encounters chosen by Edmonds virtually unaltered. However, it is possible that the incidents chosen by Edmonds misled Churchill. Three of these "good fights" were located in the south and Churchill introduces them thus.

"The devoted resistance of the isolated British posts levied a heavy toll upon the enemy and played a recognizable part in the final result. From the outset the Germans learned that they had to deal with troops who would fight as long as they had ammunition, irrespective of what happened in any other quarter of the field or whether any hope of success or escape remained." He then describes how sections of the 58th, 18th and 36th divisions held out until dusk on the 22nd. Now it is true that these posts did hold out until the time designated by Churchill, but the reason is that they were not in an area vital to the German advance and so the Germans made no effort to overrun them. The Germans merely surrounded the posts, waited until they ran out of ammunition and food and then accepted their surrender.

(1) The World Crisis, p.1179-81.
(2) Churchill Papers, 8/190.
(3) Edmonds to Churchill 20/7/26, Ibid. 8/203.
(4) Those concerning the 58th and 36th divisions are quoted verbatim; the accounts of the 24th and 9th divisions are slightly changed, and the 18th division substantially rearranged. Edmonds to Churchill 20/7/26, Churchill Papers, 8/203 and The World Crisis, p.1254-6.
(5) The World Crisis, p.1254.
(7) Ibid.
In fact, Churchill has given a slightly misleading impression of the whole day's fighting on the 21st of March. We are given a picture of heroic defence, prolonged to the last and exacting an enormous toll on the attackers. However, as Middlebrook has pointed out, "21 March 1918 was not one of the British Army's best days", and his analysis of British losses reveals that 21,000 men were taken prisoner, an indication that all groups did not fight to the last. Nevertheless, if these facts had been known when Churchill was writing, it is hardly likely that Edmonds, his only source, would have drawn his attention to them or Churchill published them if Edmonds had. The event was too close for this kind of revelation.

We have now completed an account of the influences and contributions of Churchill's principal advisers on The World Crisis. However, another major influence was that of a published book. It was noted in earlier chapters that Churchill had cause to quote from "Sir Douglas Haig's Command" by Boraston and Dewar. Churchill's usual purpose in doing this was to disparage the opinions expressed by Boraston. In "The Blood Test" chapter Churchill uses Boraston as an example of an extreme advocate of the policy of attrition. On these occasions footnote references are given to the book so that the reader can check for himself the erroneous opinions expressed there. However, in these later chapters Churchill often uses Boraston's book for other purposes. The major one is to provide information. For example, the number of German prisoners and guns captured listed on p.1342, p.1360 and p.1342, as well as the casualty totals for the British for September and October 1918 are taken directly from Boraston. Other snippets of information, such as the

(2) Ibid. p.322.
(3) Churchill's account of the 9th division on March 21st is also misleading. He claims that the division held on "against every assault, and only retired when ordered to do so," (p.1251). In fact, the 9th division was not heavily attacked on the 21st and 22nd, only the South African brigade being assaulted in strength, Edmonds, 1918, V.1, p.193 and p.295; Middlebrook, Kaiser's Battle, p.196. However, the 9th was Churchill's old division and he was no doubt anxious to give the best impression of it possible.
(4) See The World Crisis, p.1258.
number of German divisions which attacked the Portuguese and the casualties of and prisoners taken by the 55th division in the Lys battle, also originate in Boraston's book.¹ Perhaps the best example of Churchill's use of Boraston occurs in a passage dealing with French strategy in 1918. "He [Haig] was given most distinctly to understand from Petain that, if the Germans continued to press on towards Amiens, the French troops then concentrating about Montdidier would be withdrawn in a south-west direction in order to cover Paris."² This could be compared with Churchill's account of the same incident. "He [Petain] informed Haig that if the Germans continued to press on to Amiens, the French troops then concentrating about Montdidier would be withdrawn upon Beauvais to cover Paris."³ Obviously Churchill's account is based on Boraston's. It might be thought that this is merely a minor form of plagiarism and that Churchill is entitled to procure facts from an author with whose opinions he disagrees. What should be noted, however, is that Churchill does not acknowledge his debt to Boraston's work in the later chapters of The World Crisis. Thus Boraston's opinions are openly derided while his research is clandestinely borrowed.

In one area Boraston has misled Churchill. Following Boraston's account of the joint Australian-American attack on the Hindenberg Line on September 27th, 1918, Churchill has the Americans impetuously rushing forward and then being mowed down by the Germans emerging from the Bullecourt Tunnel.⁴

According to Bean, however, there was no precipitate advance; nor did the Germans use the tunnel as a rally point. The American casualties were caused by German reserves counter attacking, the Americans being partic-

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¹ Boraston & Dewar, Sir Douglas Haig's Command, V.2, p. 170, 174 and The World Crisis p.1268, 1270. There are numerous other examples.
² Boraston & Dewar, Sir Douglas Haig's Command, V.2, p. 133.
³ The World Crisis, p. 1261.
⁴ The World Crisis, p. 1364.
ularly vulnerable because fog and smoke split them up into small groups. 1

Two more features of the writing of these later chapters should be noted. It is interesting to note that after completing a lengthy chapter on the preparation, cause and consequences of the French Spring Offensive, The World Crisis contains only the most sketchy account of the battle of Passchendaele. This is especially surprising as Passchendaele is used as one of the supreme examples of military folly in "The Blood Test". The reason for this omission is not clear. No clue is provided by the Churchill Papers. Lack of material could not have been a factor for Edmonds supplied Churchill with at least one document on Passchendaele 2 and would presumably have been prepared to supply others. Perhaps Churchill considered that any points he could make in relation to the battle would merely repeat those made in the Somme chapter. Clearly he preferred to concentrate his attention on Cambrai, which occupies a good proportion of this chapter, and to use that battle to drive home his point about the futility of attrition.

The section of The World Crisis which deals with the events of 1917 provides the only instance where Churchill omitted a draft chapter altogether. The chapter was originally to be titled "The Offensive Problem by Land and Sea" and was to consist largely of two memoranda written by Churchill - "Mechanical Power in the Offensive 7/11/16" and "Naval War Policy 1917 (7/2/17)". 3 Churchill moved the former memorandum to his first "munitions" chapter 4 and retitled the now purely naval chapter "Thoughts on a Naval Offensive". 5 The main thrust of this chapter, which now almost entirely consisted of the naval paper, was that the policy being followed at sea was

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1. Bean C.E.W., The Australian in France 1918, V.6, "Australian Official History", Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1942, p.993-4. Churchill was also given a version of the Australian-American attack by General Freyberg and for obvious reasons he declined to use it. The incident is hardly of the kind that finds its way into an official history and has proved impossible to verify. However, it should be quoted out of general interest. "The story about the Americans is that they went too far, were almost surrounded and an Australian division had to be put in to rescue them. The Aussies were very angry and brought the whole lot back Yankees and Bosch and jammed them into the prisoners cages." Churchill Papers, 8/190.

2. Edmonds to Churchill 20/7/26, Churchill Papers, 8/203.

3. Churchill Papers, 8/104.

4. The World Crisis, p.1148-9. See also Appendix N.

5. Keyes to Churchill 1/12/26, Keyes Papers, 15/5.
too passive and that what was needed was an offensive scheme that would force the German navy to fight. Churchill thought that this could be achieved by the old plan of the capture of a German island, either Borkum or Sylt. The details of how such an operation would be carried out were then given in some depth. Churchill commented, "[The capture of the German island] should certainly have been after long preparation the supreme effort of the British Navy at the latest by 1917. Its risks, difficulties and expense in material must be compared with those involved in the defensive war against the submarine." However, Churchill was not as confident in the soundness of the scheme as these comments would suggest and, before making a final decision on whether to include the chapter, he sent it to Keyes, asking if he thought it would be ridiculed by service opinion. After considering the chapter Keyes pointed out to Churchill that a similar scheme had been studied by the Plans division of the Admiralty in 1917 and had been found to be impractical. He further stated that the seizure of an island would not necessarily have meant the end of the submarine campaign. The U-boats could have always used the Kattegatt and, with the closing of the Dover Straits, this would not have meant a greatly increased journey. These conclusions decided Churchill. He replied to Keyes, "So many thanks for your searching criticisms of my Borkum plan. It has proved fatal to the inclusion of the chapter in any form, which is probably a good thing." In fact, Churchill did not entirely part with this chapter. Some pages from his memorandum had already been included in a chapter in Volume 1.

(1) Churchill Papers, 8/104.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Churchill to Keyes 29/10/26, Churchill Papers, 8/203.
(4) Keyes to Churchill 1/12/26, Ibid. 8/174.
(5) Churchill to Keyes 18/12/26, Keyes Papers, 15/5.
(6) See the opening two pages of "The North Sea Front" The World Crisis p. 112-4.
For about half of the period covered by Volume 3 of *The World Crisis* Churchill was Minister of Munitions. The *World Crisis* being admittedly based on a strong thread of personal experience, Churchill could hardly omit his work at Munitions. Nor would this have been his desire. Yet incorporating his munitions work into the book presented him with problems. He had clearly decided that the book would be largely devoted to a study of the military and naval aspects of the war. Unlike his treatment of his tenure at the Admiralty where his work had been central to the course of the war, detailed descriptions of the day to day running of the Ministry of Munitions could easily interrupt the main theme. Yet initially this is the way in which Churchill decided to tackle the problem. Furthermore, not being attracted to a statistical approach to his subject, instead of the detailed production figures, charts and diagrams one might expect to find in an account of the Ministry of Munitions, Churchill decided to tell his story principally by republishing his official minutes and memoranda. Thus, originally in the chapter entitled "At the Ministry of Munitions" were included nearly 50 pages of this type of material, making it by far the longest chapter in the book. Several of Churchill's advisers, however, counselled against this solution. Hankey commented, "I think there are too many of your own memoranda and minutes. They destroy the perspective of your story." As the following letter makes clear, Beaverbrook's influence was decisive. Churchill wrote to him,

"I have from the beginning had great misgivings about the stodgy mass of 'past official documents' which figure from Chapter XII to XVI. Of course they were written with my heart's blood and explain my ideas about the war better than anything else. Your view, however, decides me. Three-quarters will go into the Appendix or be outed altogether. Of the four chapters the "Naval Offensive" one vanishes to the Appendix, [later omitted], two are compressed into one, and the fourth is shortened to half. I am indebted to you for giving me the impulse to overcome my affection for these documents. It is like tearing a bit of skin off one's thumb."

(1) Churchill Papers, 8/104. The material was eventually inserted at the end of the first paragraph on p.1146.
(2) Hankey to Churchill 8/12/26, Churchill Papers, 8/204.
(3) Churchill to Beaverbrook 27/11/26, Ibid., 8/204.
After the removal of the bulk of Churchill's munitions documents, very little remained about munitions in The World Crisis. Three chapters, "At the Ministry of Munitions", "The Munitions Budget" and "The Unfought Campaign" contain virtually all the specific references to munitions, and approximately a fifth of those chapters contain papers which are more concerned with strategy than with the production of armaments. Apart from these chapters, Churchill manages to integrate some references to his munitions work into his battle descriptions. Much of his time in 1918 was spent on the Inter-Allied Munitions Council which had headquarters in Paris. In this way Churchill often contrived to be at the front when a battle was in progress or impending. These personal descriptions are of some value and, indeed, are practically the only sections from the 1918 chapters which are still quoted by historians.¹

Returning to the main body of Churchill's material, we find that the issues he has chosen to include are: the formation of the Munitions Council, disputes with the Admiralty over priority, the 1918 Munitions Budget, restrictions on imports of iron ore and steel, munitions co-ordination with the United States, the Coventry Strike, manpower problems and his mission to Clemenceau in April 1918. Superficially this list of subjects is quite impressive. However, many of the issues are dealt with in a rather uninformative way. For example, the 1918 Munitions Budget is merely reproduced. Its implications are hardly discussed. The section on the United States largely consists of a series of Churchill's memoranda on such diverse subjects as artillery and nitrates. Restrictions on imports are also dealt with by way of the Minister's Official Minutes.

The problem with Churchill's approach is that quite often the documents quoted are peripheral to the policy decisions taken. To take but two instances; the munitions budget is reproduced almost in its entirety and the language used indicates that it was written by Churchill. Yet because

¹ e.g. Middlebrook, Kaiser's Battle, p.209; Essame The Battle for Europe, p.151; Pitt, 1918: The Last Act, p.154, 191.
of decisions taken by the War Cabinet many of the figures for steel production etc. were superseded and the document rendered of limited interest. Churchill's papers on manpower policy were also of marginal influence, all major decisions being made by the War Cabinet. In short, what we are given is rather unsatisfactory and a clear picture of Churchill's work and influence barely emerges. There is also a heavy emphasis on the more colourful episodes of his tenure, dashing across France with Clemenceau, meetings with Haig, conferences with the Allies, becoming the "Nitrate King" etc.

A further problem with this approach is that, when a document is merely quoted without comment, it is impossible for the reader to know whether the policy put forward therein was followed up and had a major influence, whether it was ignored, or even whether it was feasible. A case in point is a paper written in October 1917. In that paper Churchill suggests (in part) the "extensive development of trench mortars", and the development of a system of railway sidings behind the front to allow heavy railway mounted artillery to be switched quickly from one sector to another. These two ideas were considered by the Co-ordination Sub-Committee of the Ministry and found to be totally impractical with the resources available. Given that Churchill has merely reproduced his paper without further comment, this fact is not revealed to readers of The World Crisis.

A third problem is that Churchill omits sections of his memoranda and in these instances it is often not possible to ascertain whether the deleted material is of any importance. In the case of "Munitions Possibilities" excisions have been made in five places in the paragraphs published in the main body of The World Crisis. On four occasions the deletions are trivial but in the fifth Churchill has omitted a paragraph putting forward two options

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(1) See The World Crisis, p.1149-1154 and Appendix N, p.1440-1446.
(2) Ibid., p.1141.
(3) Ibid., p.1142-3.
(4) Minutes of the Co-ordination Sub-Committee 19/10/17, Mm 4/5160.
for 1918; concentrate on production of the mechanical devices suggested, draw on the men and materials set aside for 1919, and make 1918 the "supreme climax" of the war; or build up the 1918 programmes more slowly and decide on a climax in 1919.¹ The Co-ordination Committee also considered this policy and then pointed out to Churchill that any retardation of the 1918 programme would cause dislocation of workshops and add to labour difficulties and that the 1918 programme involved the erection of many factories which could not come into production before 1919 and there was thus little chance of "drawing" on them for 1918.² No doubt these criticisms led Churchill to delete the paragraph but even had it been included, without being aware of the basic flaw in Churchill's argument the reader would not be in a position to judge if the policy put forward was practicable.

In considering the way in which Churchill has handled the munitions issues, it has not been thought worthwhile to embark upon extensive criticisms of many of those subjects which are included in The World Crisis. However, one subject included in The World Crisis may be of some interest and will be examined here.

Churchill devotes some space to outlining what he considers to be the unreasonable demands made by the Admiralty on scarce materials, and he chronicles, with some satisfaction, a dispute over ship plates which ended when his department exposed the fact that the Admiralty were not using anything like the number of plates with which they were being supplied.³ Several things should be noted about the Admiralty-munitions disputes. First the habits which led the Admiralty to claim absolute priority for materials over other departments certainly flourished when Churchill was First Lord.⁴ Secondly, in the ship plate dispute the Admiralty denied hoarding plates, claiming that any stockpiling was only temporary and was caused by the supply

¹ Cab 24/30. The deletions came at the end of the memorandum as printed in The World Crisis, see p.1154.
² Minutes of the Co-ordination Sub-Committee 29/10/17, Mun 4/5160.
³ The World Crisis, p.1141-2 and p.1154-7.
⁴ History of Ministry of Munitions VI, Pt III p.94.
of labour and stock being out of phase.1 Thirdly, there were many more disputes between the two departments than those listed by Churchill. Disagreements occurred over airship sheds,2 labour,3 and what the Admiralty regarded as unjustified interference by Churchill in matters of purely naval concern such as destroyer design and the withdrawal of guns from warships for the army.4 The last dispute was only solved by Lloyd George issuing instructions to Churchill to confine himself to munitions matters.5

In conclusion there seems little doubt that the last volume of The World Crisis benefited, on balance, from the wide-ranging comments offered to Churchill by his advisers. Beaverbrook's suggestion that a chapter on home politics be added was certainly appropriate for a general survey of the war. His decisive condemnation of Churchill's plan to include a mass of munitions documents saved the readers of The World Crisis from ploughing through this rather stodgy material and improved the balance of the book. On Churchill's view of Lloyd George Beaverbrook was less influential. Churchill had clearly decided that he had struck the appropriate balance and was not willing to change.

Haig's influence was generally beneficial. He supplied Churchill with accurate accounts of the origin of the Arras offensive and the Calais conference and is largely correct in the line he took on Anglo-French military relations and the respective contributions made by the French and British Armies in 1918. Thus, although Churchill's account of the prolongation of Passchendaele and the policy which Haig would have followed had he been reinforced in the winter of 1918 is rather too favourable to G.H.Q., there is no doubt that his account of the final battles attains a balance not always evident in his earlier military chapters and that this achievement partly resulted from Haig's influence. It must be said, however, that the most

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(1) Geddes to Churchill 25/1/18, Adm 116/602.
(2) War Priority Committee Minutes 14/1/18, Cab 40/2.
(3) Geddes to Churchill 22/7/18, [not sent] Adm 116/604.
(4) Geddes to Lloyd George 16/8/17, Lloyd George Papers, F/17/6/7.
(5) Bonar Law to Geddes 21/8/17, Lloyd George Papers, F/30/2/21.
remarkable aspect of the Haig-Churchill collaboration was that it took place at all.

As for Churchill's other advisers, the information supplied by Edmonds ensured that Churchill had many of the primary sources at his disposal and Keyes performed a valuable service by ensuring that no more pages of *The World Crisis* were taken up by yet another discussion of the supposed merits of the Borkum plan.

Thus the later chapters of *The World Crisis* contain some of the most balanced and judicious writing in the book and Churchill deserves much credit for the discernment with which he handled the advice given him. However, it seems that this balance was achieved at a cost, namely, that the fervour which enlivened and distorted Churchill's discussion of the naval war, the Dardanelles campaign and even Jutland, is missing, especially from the "1918" chapters. In this section Churchill's writing takes on a calmer aspect but interest falls away as one series of blandly described battles succeeds another. In avoiding the many pitfalls and errors detailed previously Churchill has achieved only ordinariness, and the critic is left with the paradox that perhaps it was the partisan approach that gave the earlier volumes their extraordinary interest. But this is a subject better left to the final summing up of *The World Crisis* to which we now must turn.
CONCLUSION

For convenience and clarity a final assessment of The World Crisis will be dealt with in the following way: first the three main constituent parts of the book, the naval war, the Dardanelles, and the war in 1916-18 will be considered as entities; then themes which have emerged as common to the whole book will be discussed and a final summing up attempted.

The Naval War

The first questions that have to be asked of Churchill's account of the naval war are, how adequate is his coverage of the main events? and, has he managed to strike the right balance between the episodes chosen for inclusion? A glance at a list of the main subjects dealt with by Churchill in The World Crisis, Heligoland, Scarborough Raid, Dogger Bank, Goeben, Coronel, Falklands and Jutland, reveals that it has been the description of battles with which Churchill has been most concerned. There is little on the organizational aspects of the submarine war, nothing on commerce protection, the relationship between British sea-power and trade or the work of the Grand Fleet. These are important omissions, especially when it realized that some of the actions described, were of minor importance. Nevertheless Churchill has some justification for his choice of events. In the first place he no doubt included those incidents which he considered would have the most appeal to a wide readership. Secondly he was writing a personal tale and there seems little doubt that at the Admiralty he took an interest in battles, even to the extent of writing operational orders, which did not extend to say, seaborne trade. The type of account he has chosen to write can therefore be defended on the grounds of personal involvement as well as desire to tell an exciting story.

This justification can also be extended to the amount of space devoted to each incident. It is doubtful if in any general history of the war a historian could give good grounds for including a whole chapter on the
Scarborough Raid, the escape of the Goeben, the Dogger Bank or even Coronel. Churchill, however, witnessed these events from the Admiralty and a proportion of each account/spent on valuable descriptions of how naval battles were viewed from Whitehall. We must be grateful to Churchill for recording these rarely chronicled scenes and on these grounds partly excuse him for concentrating so much on relatively unimportant incidents.

As far as reliability is concerned, Churchill's narrative can be criticized on three counts. Firstly, he has a tendency to exaggerate the successes of the naval war and overstate the benefits which flowed from them. Heligoland and the Dogger Bank, as has been shown, were in reality hardly more than minor skirmishes that did little to alter the naval balance in Britain's favour. Yet for Churchill Heligoland allegedly affected German naval policy for the rest of the war and Dogger Bank is described as a smashing victory. In dealing with the Scarborough Raid, certain aspects of the Dogger Bank encounter and Jutland Churchill agonizes over a series of "lost opportunities" when in fact even if the British had destroyed entirely the opposing German force the naval war would have been little affected. Lost opportunities also play a large part in Churchill's account of Jutland but in this case it is highly problematical whether the opportunities ever existed. In the published version of The World Crisis the highly speculative nature of the results which Churchill claims would have followed a British victory at Jutland is not recognized.

Secondly, Churchill is always prone to ignore the difficulties faced by local commanders and how those difficulties were often compounded by the actions of the Admiralty. This is particularly noticeable in Churchill's description of the Goeben incident where most of the responsibility for the escape of the German ship is placed upon Milne and Troubridge and the ambiguity and often the incompetence of Admiralty instructions is glossed over. Churchill's treatment of Cradock falls into the same category and even the difficulties of Admiral Christian, forced to patrol a narrow
stretch of water close to enemy bases, are not taken into account. Nevertheless it should be noted that Churchill's treatment of these men stops a long way short of vilification and that his version of their actions is lent plausibility by the fact that in various ways Milne, Troubridge, Cradock and Christian all fell considerably short of what might have been expected of a British admiral in wartime.

Thirdly, Churchill shows a constant disposition to leave out facts that do not fit the case he is constructing. No doubt all historians have this tendency but Churchill seems to exhibit it in a more advanced form than most. Thus the telegram to Milne of August 3rd, which showed the diversity of Admiralty aims in the Mediterranean is omitted. Attention is not drawn to the misuse of the battlecruiser Australia nor are the clear warnings of Patey concerning the danger of von Spee arriving in South American waters recorded. No mention is made of the failure of the Admiralty to pass on the German decodes to Jellicoe on the night of May 31st. There is no discussion of the state of the east coast bases in the pre-war period or the defective ordinance (especially mines and torpedoes) with which the navy was to enter the war for it is essential that Churchill ignore these deficiencies if he is to maintain, as a major theme of the pre-war chapters, his contention that in August 1914 "the Fleet was ready".

Churchill's account of the naval war can also be criticized as being unduly theoretical. Mundane factors such as the state of visibility and knowledge available to Admirals at the time of battle are often ignored. These factors are particularly relevant to a discussion of Churchill's Jutland chapters where his suggested tactics for Jellicoe while always elegant and well-thoughtout are completely impractical.

A final criticism that can be made of the naval chapters of The World Crisis concerns Churchill's handling of the leading naval personalities and particularly his treatment of Beatty and Jellicoe. As has been shown Churchill hardly loses an opportunity to praise Beatty. The Admiral's
errors at Scarborough, Dogger Bank and Jutland are entirely overlooked. In contrast Jellicoe's contributions to the pre-war navy, the Heligoland battle and the Scarborough Raid are ignored by Churchill and his hypercritical attitude towards the British commander-in-chief at Jutland resulted in a narrative which lacks balance and comprehension. Yet in their overall strategic and tactical outlook, little separated the two Admirals, as Beatty's tenure in charge of the Grand Fleet was to show. In *The World Crisis* Churchill completely loses sight of this point and continually contrasts the dashing Beatty with the cautious and dour Jellicoe. Clearly Churchill was attracted by Beatty's style of command, of which informality and panache were key features, and repelled by the unassuming Jellicoe. Of course there is something to be said for Churchill's point of view. Despite his faults Beatty made an excellent commander-in-chief and it is hard to identify a contemporary who could have taken his place. Despite his virtues Jellicoe's pessimism later distorted his judgement and eventually led to his dismissal. However, in *The World Crisis* Churchill exaggerates the faults of Jellicoe and the virtues of Beatty to the point of caricature and his portraits of the two Admirals must be treated with extreme caution.

Notwithstanding his attitude to Jellicoe there are many occasions in *The World Crisis* where Churchill avoids any mention of conflict between himself and his colleagues and takes care to moderate a censorious attitude. Thus there is no mention of his quarrel with Bridgeman or his disagreements with Prince Louis. Criticisms of Milne, Troubridge, Lloyd George are tempered. In some ways this policy is self-serving. Churchill's clash with Bridgeman hardly showed the First Lord in the best light. His desire that the reputation of Prince Louis remain intact had an ulterior motive. Harsh criticisms of Milne, a Churchill appointee, might have raised awkward questions. Lloyd George and Troubridge had been close colleagues. Thus Churchill's treatment of these men could be put down to self-interest. On the other hand the position could be more complicated than this. It seems
possible that in dealing with these incidents Churchill is consciously trying to distance himself from the events and take a more objective view. Thus tempering a criticism of Milne not only serves Churchill's own purpose but is demanded in a work whose opening chapters proclaim it to have a wide historical sweep. The omission of a petty quarrel with Bridgeman protects Churchill's reputation and maintains the dignity of a major historical work. In this way Churchill the historian protects Churchill the politician.

Finally it remains to assess what Churchill's account of the naval war has to offer the reader. Firstly, there is the prose style in which the book is written. Although this wears a somewhat archaic air and is too florid for many tastes, Churchill is nevertheless rarely dull and is always able to marshall his arguments and describe complicated actions with admirable clarity. Secondly, because of Churchill's deep involvement with his subject his narrative has an immediacy that other more detached historians have not been able to match. A good example of this is his description of the Antwerp expedition in which the atmosphere of the war-torn city is vividly recaptured. More importantly, The World Crisis gives a powerful impression of the naval war as seen by one of the most important participants on the allied side. Especially important is its portrayal of how naval actions appeared to those giving the directions at the Admiralty. For these reasons this section of the book will retain its value despite Churchill's often questionable interpretation of events.

The Dardanelles

Because of Churchill's close and continual involvement with the Dardanelles campaign his section on the operation occupies almost one-third of The World Crisis and is of extraordinary interest. Nevertheless it should be apparent that Churchill's Dardanelles chapters attracted heavier and more consistent criticism than any other section of the book. These criticisms should now be summed up. Turning first to the earlier Dardanelles
chapters it will be remembered that they were misleading in three ways. It was noted that the rationale put forward by Churchill in *The World Crisis* for investigating alternative theatres of war was that action elsewhere was necessary to break the deadlock in the west. This was shown to be fallacious as the planning of four out of five of them (Holland is the exception) began long before that deadlock set in. This particularly applies to the Dardanelles which was first investigated by Churchill in October 1914. A related point is that in *The World Crisis* Churchill exaggerates the importance he placed on the Dardanelles scheme at the time. Thus in his discussion of events of January 1915 virtually all mention of other operations (Zeebrugge, Borkum, Holland) is excluded, when, as has been shown, active discussions on all of these plans continued throughout the period. Apparently Churchill is anxious in *The World Crisis* to establish the view that action at the Dardanelles was his one consistent strategic idea since the beginning of the war. In fact it was merely one (and not always the most important) of a bewildering number of alternatives.

A second facet of Churchill's early Dardanelles chapters that can be criticized is his assertion that a decision was made in favour of an attack at the Dardanelles because there was an overwhelming consensus of political and naval opinion in agreement with it. It has been suggested that this was certainly not the case so far as Churchill's naval advisers were concerned, not one of whom seems to have supported the naval operation without reservations. Nevertheless it was also shown that Churchill was able to construct a plausible case because of the vacillating and contradictory nature of the naval advice which he was given. Jackson always hedged on the vital issues, Wilson did not regard the decision as his particular problem, Bartoleme's equivocations made his advice worthless, Oliver was mainly in favour because the Dardanelles distracted Churchill from the more dangerous Borkum plan, Fisher refused to make his objections clear and continually shifted his ground when confronted by
Churchill. *The World Crisis* is more reliable on the attitude to the operation of Churchill's political colleagues, many of whom expressed great enthusiasm for the plan. However, Churchill does not make the point that their enthusiasm partly resulted from his own rather dubious assurances that the naval attack would not need supporting troops. Indeed it was suggested that Churchill may have deliberately refrained from raising the question of troops at this early stage of the debate.

This points brings us to a third area where *The World Crisis* misleads. Churchill's discussion of the use of troops to support the Fleet contains a number of contradictions and inconsistencies. His own two changes in attitude on this subject (one in early February when he become convinced that military operations would have to be undertaken; a second in early March when his confidence in the navy's ability to succeed alone reasserted itself) are concealed. He also does not admit in *The World Crisis* that Kitchener withheld troops partly because whenever he pressed Churchill on the chances of the purely naval plan, he was reassured that the Fleet could do the job alone. Eventually this contradictory position forces Churchill in *The World Crisis* into the untenable position of berating both Kitchener for failing to supply troops and de Robeck for suggesting that they were essential. Such is the skill with which the book is written, however, that his contradiction has received little attention from historians.

Churchill's later sections on the naval and military aspects of the campaigns are extremely variable in quality. The most satisfactory section is perhaps his description of the naval attack up to the 18th. of March. The naval operations are set down in some detail and most of the facts are correctly summarized. However, Churchill's basic assumption that the naval plan as developed by Carden and the Admiralty Staff was sound leads him to put forward specious reasons for its failure such as the timidity of Carden and de Robeck or the 'misuse' of the Queen Elizabeth. With de Robeck's accession to the command Churchill changes this approach somewhat and claims
that the plan was abandoned at the very moment when success was assured. All these assertions were shown to be very far from the truth. The reason for failure, which is never admitted in *The World Crisis*, is that the task facing the Fleet was too great.

Churchill's military chapters on Gallipoli are some of the most disappointing in the whole book. There is no discussion of the planning of the April 25th landings and Churchill's account of the Hellas landings does not analyse the controversial decision to evacuate Y beach. The same can be said for his descriptions of Suvla Bay. Again there is little on the planning of the operation and such key events at the causes of the delayed landing at A beach and the dislocation of the 10th. Divisions landing are not mentioned at all. Whether Churchill adopted this sketchy approach to avoid criticizing the actions of his friend, Hamilton, is not known, but the result is most inadequate.

The theoretical nature of Churchill's writing on strategy which was noted in the naval chapters is again very much in evidence in his Gallipoli account. His repeated assertions that one (or two) extra divisions would have, at various points, turned the scale in the allies favour ignore the difficult logistical problems that the deployment of additional divisions on the Gallipoli Peninsula would have caused. In similar fashion he moves divisions over battlefields like chess pieces, in the case of the August attack at Anzac, completely disregarding the nature of the ground over which the troops would have had to manoeuvre. The tendency to ignore logistic factors and the state of the troops involved in an attack also allows Churchill to disregard the real difficulties facing Stopford on August 7th and 8th.

Churchill also confuses the attainment of immediate objectives with the successful conclusion of the campaign. Thus we are successively told that the seizure of Achi Baba, Sari Bair, the Anafarta Ridge or the Narrows forts would have meant victory. In the case of the first three objectives this was
very far from the truth, and in the last case highly speculative. It has been shown that the appearance of the Fleet before Constantinople might not have produced a Turkish surrender and even if it had this might have not meant a speedy termination of the war. Thus, as with the naval battles, so with Gallipoli does Churchill overstate the results of successful action.

There are other parallels between the Gallipoli sections and that on the naval war. Churchill's treatment of Keyes and de Robeck is very similar to his handling of Beatty and Jellicoe. For Churchill, Keyes can do no wrong and his often wildly unrealistic schemes for renewing the naval attack are greeted with enthusiasm in *The World Crisis*. Keyes' dashing and flamboyant personality and often heroic actions appealed to Churchill in a way that the more sober and cautious approach of de Robeck did not. Thus de Robeck is treated with little understanding and no sympathy, his rational arguments often being dismissed as emotional reactions to the loss of ships.

It cannot be said that Churchill's discussion of the diplomatic aspects of Gallipoli is any more reliable than his military sections. The effect on the Balkans, first of the opening bombardment of February 19th, and then of the military landings, is greatly exaggerated. Nowhere in *The World Crisis* is it admitted that the events on the Eastern Front were the major considerations influencing the actions of the Balkan states. Churchill's solution to the allies' Balkan dilemma would have certainly failed had it been put into effect and his formulation ignores the practical difficulties for Grey caused by pre-war Russian pretensions in the area. Finally, Churchill's view that the antiquated Balkan peasant armies could have proved the decisive factor in the war was shown to be based on a complete disregard of the immense problems both in combining the armies of five different countries and the state of the armies themselves.

Churchill's later Gallipoli chapters occupy much less space than his account of the genesis of the operation. Political events in particular are
downplayed, Churchill confining himself to a discussion of the May political crisis and of various meetings of the War Council/Dardanelles Committee. His narrative of the May crisis gives a full account of Fisher's resignation and is quite accurate up until May 17th. From then on Churchill conceals his own attempts to cling to office and the bitterness which he felt towards Asquith and Bonar Law for their part in his downfall. In dealing with the War Council meetings The World Crisis is characterized by Churchill's continued criticisms of Kitchener for failing to choose between east and west. As has been shown this was not the case. The British war plan ensured that their major effort would be made on the Western Front but Churchill never accepts this fact, even though The World Crisis makes it clear that he had been sent to the Admiralty to ensure that this policy would be adopted.

A further comment is appropriate at this point. Throughout the Gallipoli chapters Churchill continually draws attention to the intervention of the fates to thwart the operation and reflects on the irony of various situations (the delay in sending the 29th. Division at a time when the Peninsula was unoccupied, the decision to break off the naval attack when the Turks were out of ammunition, the failure to renew the naval attack when much of the Straits defences had been dismantled.) By adopting this method Churchill is able to give his work a reflective and often dispassionate air. In reality, the supposed intervention of the fates can usually be explained in terms of human error and, as has been shown, concerning the "ironical" situations listed above, the irony is of Churchill's own making. In short Churchill uses the fates not to explain events but to explain them away.

The Dardanelles chapters of The World Crisis certainly prove, if proof was needed, that it is quite possible to base a narrative on an enormous number of documents and still produce a misleading account. It was noted that at times over 40% of Churchill's Dardanelles section was taken up with the publication of memoranda and letters. In his introduction Churchill puts forward the view that these documents would prove his case. All they prove,
however, is that Churchill has adopted an adept process of selection. Also, many of the documents are his own memoranda and the case presented in them is merely stated rather than argued or critically examined. Finally, it was noted, Churchill is not averse from deleting key sections of documents.

Considering this extensive list of criticisms is there anything positive than can be said about this section of The World Crisis? Churchill's Dardanelles chapters do contain examples of powerfully written descriptive passages. In this category fall his account of the great naval attack on March 18th., and his graphic description of the carnage on V beach on April 25th. However, what holds the attention of the reader through nearly 400 pages is the enthusiasm of the writer for his subject and the skill with which his case is unfolded. At the time that The World Crisis was written the Dardanelles campaign had provided both the high and the low point in Churchill's political life. His overwhelming desire from 1915 onwards was to vindicate his own part in events and it was this need that makes volume II of The World Crisis the best example of Churchill's skill as an apologist. In none of his other historical works does Churchill's prose achieve the same force and in reading The World Crisis it is quite possible to admire Churchill's achievement while disagreeing almost entirely with the argument he propounds.

1916-1918

The third volume of The World Crisis was found to be a curious mixture. It was discovered that many sections of it, such as Churchill's discussions of the High Command of the opposing armies, the Roumanian Campaign and British strategy in the autumn of 1917, were not worthy of detailed consideration. Also an inordinate amount of space was found to consist of Churchill's own relatively unimportant (in terms of any influence they may have had) papers and memoranda.

It is also hard to avoid the conclusion that when Churchill wrote this
volume the failure at Gallipoli was still very much on his mind. Thus throughout the first half of the volume Churchill is anxious to demonstrate the immense cost of the war on the Western Front and to point to easier alternatives in the east. For 1916 he actually recommends a second invasion of Gallipoli. In 1917 his major plan consists of a landing in Palestine. The "Blood Test" and Somme chapters are designed to show what the failure at Gallipoli meant in terms of manpower. The section on tanks demonstrates to his own satisfaction the incorrigibility of the military, whom it is claimed were incapable of adapting to this new and cheaper way of waging war.

Nevertheless volume III does contain two of Churchill's best efforts as a 'detached historian'. "The Blood Test" represents the most exhaustive and balanced effort yet made to construct a general critique of the war around casualty statistics and Churchill must be given great credit for the care with which he assembled his material. It was suggested that an interpretation based on casualty statistics ignores the many social and economic factors which might have played a part in the German defeat but taken on its own terms this chapter is a considerable scholarly achievement.

Similarly, Churchill's account of the battle of the Somme contains a balance which was lacking in other chapters written by Churchill about events in which he did not take part. Whether this aspect of Churchill's account of the Somme was due to the influence of Edmonds or whether Churchill had already determined to consult Haig on the later chapters and tempered his narrative accordingly is not known. What is clear is that Churchill has taken some trouble to understand the difficulties, instead of merely listing the deficiencies, of the British High Command.

Other areas of this volume are also quite reliable in the facts presented. Although in his last chapter on the submarine war Churchill fudges his discussion of convoys, and spends rather too much time discussing trivial issues such as Q ships, he has, with the considerable aid of Kenneth Dewar, constructed a perfectly adequate basic account of the struggle. Also with the
help of Haig, Beaverbrook and Hankey Churchill's chronicle of the 1918 battles generally strikes the correct balance and is judicious in alloting responsibility and praise between the various allied commanders.

It must be admitted, however, that Churchill's third volume does contain serious defects. The absence of any detailed discussion of the third battle of Ypres seems an error of judgement, despite the duplication in argument with the Somme chapter that its inclusion might have caused. In addition, Churchill's tank material is quite misleading in its intent and the reader emerges with a totally erroneous view of tank possibilities in 1917 and 1918. Notwithstanding its merits, the Somme chapter never really conveys the problems faced by lower order commanders during the battle, Rawlinson is exonerated from all responsibility and even Haig's role in the disaster of the first day is not made clear.

Nevertheless this volume is probably more reliable in its interpretation of events than the others. On the whole, though, this volume of *The World Crisis* lacks the interest which carried the reader through the earlier sections. Except for a few chapters Churchill merely provides a chronicle of events. The spirited if partial arguments which enlivened the earlier volumes are missing. It is then almost possible to establish a direct relationship between interest, involvement and reliability. The last volume of *The World Crisis*, which is probably the most reliable holds our interest least. The Dardanelles account is at the same time the least reliable and the most interesting. The first volume probably lies somewhere in between.

It now should be possible to make some general comments about *The World Crisis* as a whole.

In his original preface Churchill claimed that he was not writing history but presented his book as a contribution to history. To a certain extent this is true, Churchill largely tells his own story. But, as has been shown, there are many indications all through *The World Crisis* that Churchill is trying to take a more detached view of events than is usual in
a work of pure memoir. Thus even when Churchill is describing events with which he was intimately involved the book is often characterized by a breadth of outlook more commonly found in scholarly histories. Of course Churchill's approach is often self-serving and the supporters of Jellicoe, de Robeck and Monro may question the entire concept of Churchill's detachment. However it is not argued that this is Churchill's constant approach or even that it is particularly widespread. What is suggested is that in a work of this type it is unusual to find the memoirist attempting historical detachment at all. It is perhaps this quality which raises *The World Crisis* above the intellectual level of most war memoirs.

Having said this it must also be said that Churchill's technique as a historian has several notable defects. The first of these concerns the documents quoted in *The World Crisis*. The reader is never sure that the version given by Churchill is complete, or if material damaging to the case Churchill is building up has been omitted, or if any deletions made have been indicated in the text. Enough examples of this type of practice have been found to show that it was reasonably common throughout *The World Crisis*.

A second more complicated point arises out of this. The Churchill papers reveal that many of what seem to have been Churchill's true thoughts about men and events never found their way into *The World Crisis* but were deleted by the author before publication for reasons of expediency or occasionally charity. It might be said that the decision to exclude material is the prerogative of any author but *The World Crisis* would have been more revealing about Churchill's views had the deleted material been retained and from the standpoint of a scholar of the period the omissions represent a great loss.

Many of the amendments made to *The World Crisis* were the result of advice given to Churchill from a wide range of colleagues and friends who read the book before publication. What overall effect these men had on the book and whether on balance they improved Churchill's narrative is difficult to
Certainly Edmonds, Dewar and Aspinall provided Churchill with a number of useful documents that would not otherwise have been at his disposal. Also Beaverbrook, Hankey, Keyes and Haig all contributed to making Churchill's last volume better balanced both in content and approach. Nevertheless it seems that Churchill's advisers were not generally able to push him in a direction in which he was not already going. His fundamental redrafting of the passage on the possible results of a British victory at Jutland perhaps represents the only occasion on which this does not hold true. In most other cases he rejected unpalatable advice and listened to those who reinforced the general line of approach that he had already adopted. Thus he ignored Edmonds ideas on Monro and incorporated Aspinall's, refused to bring his later chapters into line with Beaverbrook's opinion of Lloyd George; consulted Haig on the 1918 battles but not on the British offensives of 1916 and 1917. In adopting this approach Churchill substantially remained his own man and the impact of his advisers on the book, though it was sometimes important and often, as in the case of Haig, fascinating, should not be exaggerated.

One issue that should be raised at this point is what The World Crisis tells us about Churchill's attitude to war. Two passages have already been quoted which indicate that Churchill was acutely conscious of the horrors of the new style of warfare that was being fought in France and Flanders. There are many other such passages throughout the book. Clearly this type of warfare did not accord with Churchill's more romantic notions of the military art and to some extent his endeavours to find alternative theatres of operations should be viewed in this context. What is never recognized in The World Crisis is that the defeat of the Germany army, which was necessary for victory, was bound to be an extremely bloody and protracted affair.

Churchill's passages on the horrors of modern warfare also indicate that although he confessed to finding war exciting he never lost his humanity
or forgot what the cost of the war was. Critics of Churchill have usually
fastened on to the first of these characteristics and forgotten the second.
But the evidence of *The World Crisis* indicates that Churchill was not the
militarist of popular legend.

This thread of humanity which runs through *The World Crisis* and which
is so noticeably absent from the works of some of Churchill's colleagues,
such as Grey and Asquith, will be one of the reasons why Churchill's book
will continue to be read. Despite its errors and misstatements it does
possess a breadth of vision to a degree quite unusual in a work of this
type. Other reasons too should ensure the books continued popularity.
Apart from Churchill's later reputation should be added the power and
stately nature of the writing and the lucidity with which Churchill is able
to discuss often quite complicated events. More important than all these
factors in compelling interest, however, is the commitment with which the book
has been written. Churchill clearly set out to vindicate his actions and
point of view and performed these tasks with verve for most of the book.
Commitment is often a characteristic decried in historical writing and in
Churchill's case the price paid for the heightened interest, in distortions
and lack of balance, would undoubtedly be regarded by some readers as too
high. But the fact remains that it is this quality which will ensure that
*The World Crisis* continues to be read when many less committed though more
accurate works have been long forgotten.
APPENDIX I  THE CHURCHILL FRENCH CORRESPONDENCE

Many quotations from correspondence between Churchill and Sir John French were published by Churchill in The World Crisis. It has already been noticed that in other chapters embarrassing or revealing sections from some of these letters were omitted by Churchill. In fact a great many of the letters were censored by Churchill. His reason for doing this usually seems to have been a desire to protect the reputation (or what was left of it) of the impulsive Field-Marshal. On other occasions he has clearly wished to conceal thoughts of his own. A group of these deletions does not relate closely to any of the subjects covered by the main body of the thesis and it has been thought appropriate to include some of the more interesting examples here.

"THE BATTLE IN FRANCE"


After the sentence ending "Our only wish is to sustain and support you" Churchill omitted "You need have no fear of casualties shocking Government or public"\(^1\) (deletion not indicated).

Later in the same letter after the sentence ending "a different country to the one you left" Churchill removed "I am working hard at the Naval Division and shall have 20,000 excellent infantry ready for you in January. If the naval decision has been reached by then, I may claim release from my work here"\(^2\).


After "simply glorious" "I have 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) Army Corps here now and a Cavalry Division. Multiply the former by 6 and the latter by 4, and I could get to Berlin in 6 weeks without any French help at all."\(^3\) (deletion not indicated)

In the same letter after "stop this interference with field operations" five paragraphs were omitted. One criticized Kitchener for appearing in France in the uniform of a Field-Marshal.\(^4\) (deletion not indicated).

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(1) See draft chapters in Churchill Papers 8/121.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.

The second paragraph was omitted. It read "Freddie Guest & I concocted a telegram to you begging you to come to us but as you haven't said you would I fear it is impossible just now." At the end of the letter three paragraphs were omitted. They included such statements as "Each day the German resistance has slackened" and that the German artillery shells were bursting "absurdly high". (deletions not indicated).

THE CHANNEL PORTS


Churchill was replying to a letter of French's to Kitchener which he had seen and which apparently criticized Kitchener and the Government for not keeping French informed about the attempts to relieve Antwerp.

He deleted his opening sentence which read "I am rather worried to read telegrams like this. It will be resented by the Cabinet & is... quite unfair." At the end of the first paragraph the following was removed "But here apparently is a French General being brought into our affairs, wh personally I do not like at all. Joffre has not behaved well about Antwerp & his diversion of promised aid rendered it useless to attempt to defend the place longer & vy difficult to extricate the garrison. Also the statement that he had diverted the Territorial division in agreement with you was not true & it is this wh causes annoyance." (deletion not indicated). The next sentence originally read "The fall of Antwerp was a bitter blow to me and a great and untimely injury to the Allied cause". The words underlined were then omitted. (deletion not indicated). After the words "prey for a victory Churchill originally had included a sentence asking French to send him a telegram so that he would have a pretext for crossing to France to visit him.  

(1)  Ibid.
(2)  Churchill Papers 8/121.
(3)  Ibid 8/125.
(4)  Ibid.
(5)  Ibid.
(6)  Ibid.
P.331 The paragraph beginning "Naval affairs at the moment" is in fact a new letter from Churchill to French written on the 14th.1

p.338 Churchill to French 26/10/14.

After "reduced my power to be useful" Churchill omitted "Personally I shd be happier with the Oxfordshire Hussars than bearing the burden here" (deletion not indicated).

p.339 After "they cannot turn" Churchill deleted a sentence suggesting that if French could say a good word for the RND in his despatch it would help to alleviate criticism of Churchill in Parliament.2 (deletion not indicated).

"THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR"

p.493 Churchill to French 13/12/14.

At the end of the letter Churchill omits a sentence telling French that he was visiting Dunkirk on the 14th with Sir Arthur Wilson and that if this coincided with an advance made by the Army he would like to come and watch.3 (deletion not indicated).

Churchill to French 28/12/14.

After "the enemy got it as bad" Churchill removed a sentence in which he suggested Haig for COS to French. Churchill said he "is without equal"4 (deletion not indicated).

p.496 Churchill to French 1/1/15.

After "great risks in your support" Churchill added that he would like to visit French but that "I must not put myself in a weak position vis-a-vis our mutual friend" (Kitchener)5.

(1) Ibid.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Churchill Papers 8/135.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid.
Churchill made many more changes to his chapters on 1917 and 1918 than those listed in Chapter 18. It was not thought worthwhile to include them all in that chapter for many are of a relatively trivial nature or tend to duplicate points illustrated by other examples. However, it is of some interest to know the total number of changes made by Churchill and for completeness the remainder are included here. They are grouped under the names of the various advisors who persuaded Churchill to make the change and there is a separate section of amendments apparently made by Churchill himself.

Haig

p.1121 (1) "General Nivelle's Experiment" Churchill had spoken of Nivelle's "glorious achievement at Douaumont". Haig commented that the Somme fighting had so depleted the German front at Verdun and so occupied them that they were taken by surprise by the French. Churchill deleted "glorious".

(2) In comparing the lack of secrecy which characterized the Nivelle offensive with the German spring offensive of 1918, Churchill stated that on the latter occasion Ludendorff had managed to make long preparations "without losing secrecy". Haig wrote "But the place & date of the attack was known beforehand". Churchill altered his account to read "without prematurely losing secrecy".

p.1124 The paragraph beginning "Both Haig and the British" was written from information supplied by Haig.

p.1232 "The German Concentration In The West" In discussing the new system of defence in use in 1918 Churchill originally wrote "The system had been instituted by Haig in conference with the Army Commanders in December". In the published version this sentence reads "the defensive system which had gradually developed as the war proceeded". The new wording had been suggested by Haig.

(1) Churchill Papers 8/161.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid.
(6) Ibid 8/166.
The Twenty-First of March

To the sentence "He (Haig) also complained of the pressure put upon him in such a situation to assign a large portion of his limited forces to the general reserve", Churchill added on Haig's advice "His forces were inadequate for even sectional and G.H.Q. Reserves. How could he then find troops for a General Reserve?"1

The Climax

Much of the detail in the last two paragraphs was apparently incorrect and was corrected with information supplied by Haig.2 Haig also suggested that Churchill include the fact that the 31st Division which was being sent forward as a reinforcement contained the 4th Brigade of Guards.3

The Surprise of the Chemin Des Dames

"the genius of Foch" was changed to "the good sense of Foch" apparently after comments by Haig.4

In discussing the placing of the British 9th Corps in the French sector on the Chemin Des Dames Churchill originally wrote "(The Corps was) sent on Foch's earnest desire to what was believed to be the quietest sector of the front in order to refit and train their recruits. In reply to formal British enquiries...the French Sixth Army stated on the morning of May 25: In our opinion there are no indications that the enemy has made preparations that would enable him to attack tomorrow".5 Haig however told Churchill that it had actually been "stated by the French" that the Chemin Des Dames was the quietest sector and this was substituted for "believed". Haig also commented that "formal warnings" had been sent to the French regarding the coming German attack and "warnings" was substituted for "enquiries" by Churchill.6

The details of the Smuts mission were supplied by Haig.7

"The Turn of The Tide" Churchill had stated that Haig had not been informed of Mangin's counter attack until the 17th.8 Haig said he knew of it on the 13th.9 Churchill deleted the reference. Two earlier

(1) Ibid 8/167.  
(2) Churchill Papers 8/168.  
(3) Ibid.  
(4) Ibid 8/169  
(5) Ibid 8/171.  
(6) Ibid.  
(7) Ibid. This statement originally came after the sentence ending "with twenty divisions".
references to this effect were also removed by Churchill.  

Concerning the planning of the Battle of Amiens Churchill has written that the British wished to attack independently of the French but Foch insisted that they attack side by side and that "Haig deferred to Foch's general view". After reading Haig's notes all reference to Foch's intervention was omitted, Churchill merely commenting "To ensure complete co-operation Foch placed all the troops, British and French, under Sir Douglas Haig".

In his description of the battle Churchill stated that the French had attacked "with admirable vigour but without tanks". Haig said that he had it on the authority of Dubeney, the French Commander, that some of the French Colonial infantry had bolted. Churchill deleted "with admirable vigour".

General du Cane (Head of the British Mission at G.Q.G. 1918)

du Cane supplied Churchill with copies of correspondence between Foch and Haig which he had obtained confidentially from Weygand Foch's Chief of Staff.

"The Turn of The Tide" Churchill had used the correspondence supplied by du Cane in relation to the destination of the British reserves in July 1918. After reading this section du Cane commented "The quoting of these documents verbatim might perhaps lead to trouble. They are confidential. Might they be summarized". In fact this section was largely re-written as a result of Haig's comments and Churchill eventually omitted the Foch-Haig letters.

(1) They originally appeared after "the Government would support him" on p.1326 and after the sentence ending "his discussion with Haig" on p.1329.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Churchill Papers 8/171.
(4) Ibid.
(5) du Cane to Churchill 21/10/22. Churchill Papers 8/41.
(6) Originally after the sentence ending "to guard Paris".
(7) Ibid 8/171.
du Cane also supplied Churchill with an anecdote concerning Mangin's counter attack in July 1918. As liaison officer du Cane was entrusted by Foch with the task of telling G.H.Q. the exact time of the French offensive. Churchill used this story but du Cane insisted that the following description of his arrival at G.H.Q. be omitted "General du Cane was badly received at the British Headquarters. The idea of a French Counter-attack was derided by the Staff". ¹

Hankey

p.1124-5 "General Nivelle's Experiment" Accounts of the Anglo-French Conference of December 26th and January 15th and the Rome Conference were supplied to Churchill by Hankey.²

Spiers

p.1327-8 "The Turn of The Tide" The description of Gouraud's Headquarters before the French counter attack at Rheims was given to Churchill by Spiers who was present as British Liaison Officer.³

Miscellaneous Changes Made by Churchill

p.1100 "A Political Interlude" Derby was described originally as "a blameless conservative nobleman".⁴

p.1120 "General Nivelle's Experiment". After the sentence ending "Sacre Thouzelier" Churchill had continued "Hence forward He (Joffre) observed a silence as unbroken & not less impressive than his war-time slumbers".⁵

p.1248-9 "The Twenty-First of March" Churchill had apparently included then deleted a paragraph on what Napoleon would have done in Haig's position on March 21st.⁶

p.1361 "Victory" After the sentence ending "The northern battle was victorious" Churchill had continued "The King of the Belgians led his troops across the parapet in person before proceeding to

(1) Ibid. This was originally included after "with twenty divisions" on p.1330. The record of a conversation between du Cane and Foch originally included on p.1326 was also omitted.
(2) Hankey to Churchill. Churchill Papers 8/204.
(3) Spiers to Churchill 14/10/26. Ibid 6/203.
his post of Command".\(^1\) Churchill could not verify this unlikely incident and it was omitted.

p.1369 On the action of the Kaiser in November 1918 Churchill originally had written "The Supreme War Lord fled. It was perhaps his duty to flee".\(^2\) The last sentence was then deleted.

p.1371 In describing the scene in London on Armistice day Churchill had written "My wife arrived and we decided to go and offer our congratulations to the Prime Minister, on whom, whatever may now be said, the central impact of the home struggle had fallen..."\(^3\)

The words underlined were then removed.

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(1) Ibid 8/173.
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid.
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