

From Commander R.J. Brooke-Booth, D.S.C., R.N., to
Robert Melville, Esq.

The length of the Dardanelles was thirty-five miles from the entrance to the Port of Gallipoli where one was able to surface and charge the Batteries. Seven rows of Minefields that had to be dived under and also a Net that had to be passed through at approximately eighty feet, and one was constantly under fire from shore batteries on either side of the Straits. We had orders to proceed the following day after E.7 was caught in the Nets when she had to be sunk and the crew were taken prisoners for the remainder of the War.

Incident (1) We were patrolling the Northern Coast of the Sea of Marmara one morning and sighted a Steamer towing two Barges, we ran up alongside and as I stepped on board being in charge of the party, I was helped over the side by an officer who fired at me with his revolver and missed, at the same time they dropped a couple of bombs which failed to explode on our saddle tanks, the pandemonium then started; I was left on board the Steamer, the others had jumped back on the Submarine which started to bombard them with our four inch gun at point blank range, the Steamer then blew up and we were all in the water, I swam back to our boat (E12) and clambered back on board; the Barges were full of explosives and we blew them up. They had been trying out a Q boat stunt on us which was such a failure the Turks did not attempt any more.

Incident (2) I was boarding another Steamer before sinking her and whilst searching the ship, went into a cabin marked 'Engineer' and looking around I found a vintage bottle of Brandy which we sampled and found most excellent; it was a surprise as being a Turk he was not supposed to have alcoholic drink according to his religion, but no doubt he needed a little fortifying. Afterwards I went to the Engineerroom, the crew having abandoned ship and found a man with a Fez on his head, I was just about to shoot him when to my astonishment he shouted, 'It's only me Sir', it was one of our Stokers who had got on board, he might have lost the number of his Mess.

Incident (3) After having spent 42 days and used all our ammunition and ¹torpedoes we proceeded to return to base.

We were kept under below periscope depth by an armed Tug which followed us until we went into a small bay and sat at the bottom to shake her off and she lost us - we then shaped a course for the nets but were put down again by a destroyer. Charged the net at full speed at 80 feet: boat took up an angle of 25 degrees by the bow and sank rapidly, foremost hydroplanes jammed at 10 degrees to dive: boat hit the bottom at 245 feet the largest depth a submarine had been to at that time, conning tower scuttles broke under pressure, forward plate leaked, shut water-tight doors to keep water from the batteries, it took three men to work hydroplanes by hand, gyro became useless and magnetic compass was smashed by a shell in the conning tower. After some time at this depth of blowing tanks and working main motors, boat came to the surface, we were then shelled by forts both sides of the Narrows and small craft that had gathered around us: boat porpoised up and down at varying depths and we discovered we were towing a large piece of the Net: on getting further down the Narrows we fouled an obstruction inshore and were brought to the surface under the forts which opened fire but were unable to depress their guns sufficiently to hit us. This entanglement cleared away and we at last got the boat under proper diving trim and control, several torpedoes were fired from the shore passing well astern of us. We proceeded on our way and rose to the surface at Cape Helles: it was with great difficulty we managed to get the conning tower hatch opened as it had been damaged by gun fire. We were glad to get a breath of fresh air again. Touching on a lighter vein, the climax came when the Captain had to report to the Flagship and found his No. 1 Monkey jacket missing, I had used it to prevent the salt water getting into the batteries, at that moment I was not very popular as everything else he had to wear was ruined too.

During operations in the Sea of Marmara, four British submarines out of nine survived v. none of the French.
