



## OLD CONWAYS & IRAQ'S INLAND WATER TRANSPORT SERVICE v5

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From 1859 to 1974 the British training school ship HMS *Conway* trained young boys for a life of service at sea as officers in the British Royal Navy (RN) and Merchant Navy (MN), and in other navies around the world.

This article describes Old Conways' (OCs) involvement in The Inland Water Transport Service, part of the British Army's Royal Engineer Corps (RE), in Mesopotamia from World War I (WWI) to the end of World War II. 38 OCs were in the service and two became its Director.

The Cadet magazine referenced throughout this article is *Conway's* "house magazine" published from 1889 to date, see Section 7 Sources. Names in bold are the names of OCs (their years as *Conway* cadets are shown in brackets).

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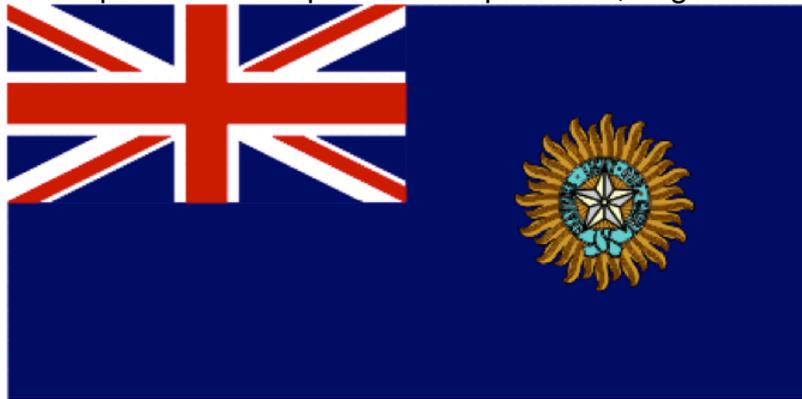
# 1 WORLD WAR I - THE RIM YEARS 1914 TO 1916

1914: WWI started with Germany's invasion of France through the Netherlands and Belgium but all the protagonists had colonies and spheres of influence around the world so wherever there were adjoining colonies or interests, naval and military operations soon followed. The conflict quickly escalated into a global war. The Middle East was one such early hot spot. Oil was the key, especially with the outbreak of war, as the RN relied on supplies from Abadan's refinery. Although the Ottoman Empire had ruled the region since 1516 when the Sultan Selim I conquered Syria, Britain and France actually controlled most of the oil supply. Germany, with her large naval fleet, inevitably coveted that source and saw an opportunity to seize it by working with her ally Turkey whose Fourth Army occupied large swathes of the region. The region was also the land gateway to India, hence Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 as a springboard to move on India. In 1914 the Ottoman Empire and Germany were expected to strike south from modern day Turkey and then west into Egypt and east into India. To counter this threat three allied campaigns were launched:

1. "Palestine" (modern Israel, the Gaza Strip, Jordan and Syria): to protect Egypt and control the eastern Mediterranean and its hinterland. This campaign was complicated by Lawrence's Arab Revolt striking north from Arabia.
2. "Mesopotamia" (modern Iraq): to safeguard the oil fields northwards along the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, exclude the enemy from the Persian Gulf, long considered a British Indian lake, and to open up a supply route to Russia.
3. "Persia" (modern Iran): to protect British oil interests in Persia, Russian interests in the Caucasus and provide a buffer for India and Russia against Turkey.



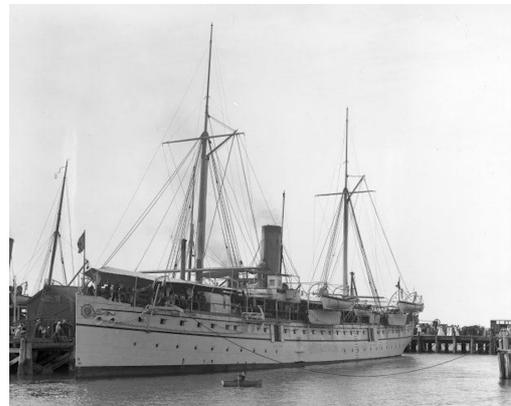
1914 Oct The Anglo-French Mesopotamian campaign was launched to protect their interests in the Persian Gulf, particularly the British oil-fuel facilities at Abadan. The Government of India was tasked with the operation and Indian Expeditionary Force D (IEF), commanded by General Nixon, was despatched from India to secure the region for the allies. The Royal Indian Marine (RIM) was ordered by Royal decree to provide “such ships, officers and men as were required ... to the RN”, and to provide warships and transports etc., to get the IEF to Mesopotamia, keep it supplied through Basra and generally exclude the enemy’s navies from the Gulf.



*The RIM Ensign*

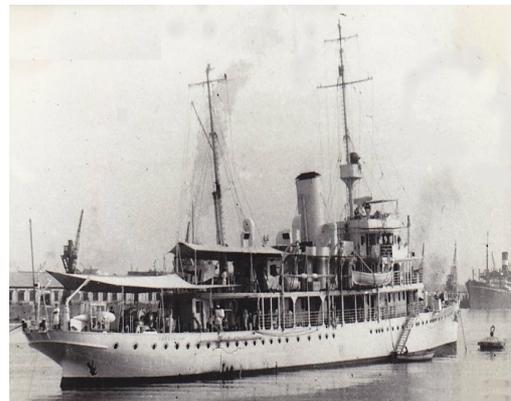
Nixon realised that a purely defence posture against the Turkish army was impracticable and so adopted a policy of

forward defence. He therefore began to move north along the rivers to push the Turks back and create a buffer zone between the opposing forces. “Mission creep” meant that Baghdad became the target and although the IEF advanced quickly the Turks mounted a strong fighting retreat. Troop movements and resupply depended upon river transport protected by river gunboats. The rivers did not have the port or maintenance facilities to support these operations so additional resources were needed to keep the river transports moving. There were only three operational paddle steamers on the Tigris, operated by Lynch Brothers, so General Nixon immediately telegraphed to India and England requesting extra vessels urgently. Initially some were sent from India, Burma (by the Irrawaddy Flotilla), the Malay States and the Nile, but later the vast majority were built new on the Clyde. The RIM soon had 500 commissioned officers and 13,000 ratings employed on inland water transport duties on the rivers. The RIM simply did not have the manpower or ships for this role and was soon stripping vessels, including a hospital ship, and men from its main and vital role of protecting the Indian mainland and Gulf waters from naval attack. The troopship, *Dalhousie*, armed with six 6-pounders, began her war as the examination vessel at Aden, before redeployment to the Persian Gulf, as



*Above: Dalhousie*

*Below: Lawrence*



permanent guard ship at Basra, and the flagship of Admiral Sir Drury Wake. The minesweeper sloop *Lawrence* was also despatched to the Gulf.

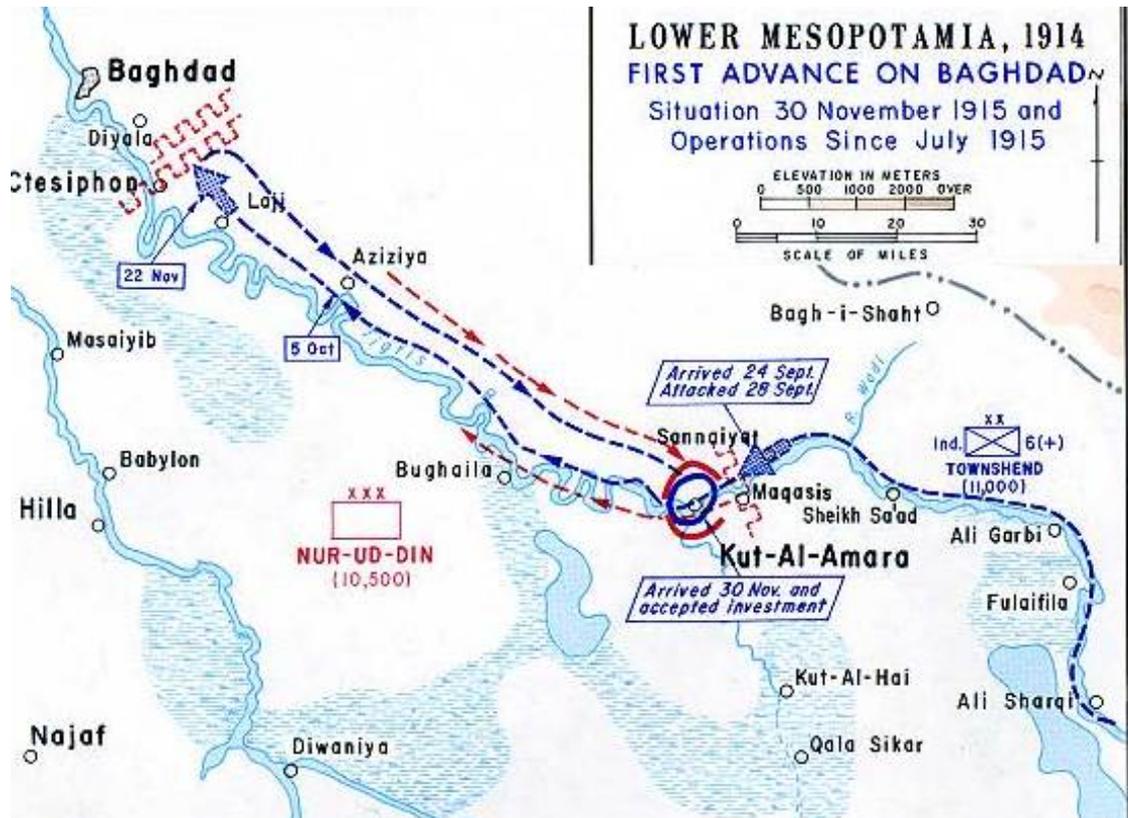
1914 Nov 6<sup>th</sup> - 1915 Apr 14<sup>th</sup> Cdr Oliver **Goldsmith** (1889-91) DSO ADC MiD RIM and Cdr Anthony **Hamilton** (1886-88) DSO RIM were Mentioned in Despatches (MiD) on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1916 by General Sir John Nixon for operations at Mesopotamia. They were the first OCs recognised in the campaign.

1915 As the IEF moved north war correspondent Edmund Candler described Mesopotamia as a *'treeless waste of swamp and desert with only bleak emptiness to conquer'*, full of desert phenomena, such as mirages, sandstorms and limitless horizons. It was it *'a country of topsy-turveydom as regards the subjective estimate of the eyes'*, wrote one amazed soldier in his memoir; camels looked like *'huge dissipated compasses and floating ships'*, infantry became sheep, a motor car became a *'few filmy lines'*, and wagons merely black dots. Visual signalling was almost useless and ranging difficult in *'a fairyland that danced and glimmered'*, recalled an officer soon after the war. Soldiers often became lost and found it impossible to observe their fire and discern its results. British personnel were intensely aware that the land between the IEF and General Allenby's troops further west *'spanned the whole land of Holy Writ, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and from Babylon to Shush'*. They wrote of being *'immensely moved by the close contact'* with the Garden of Eden, Ezra's Tomb, the Tower of Babel, Ur of the Chaldees and other Old Testament sites. Passing by biblical sites *'brought to many of us ... the realization that the tales of the Old Testament were based on fact'*, wrote one soldier. There, affirmed a war correspondent, *'you live the story of the Bible, and you do not wonder in the least if it is true; you know it is'*. This mobile desert campaign was a far cry from the static, frozen and muddy Western Front.

1915 May 31<sup>st</sup> - June 4<sup>th</sup> Cdr Oliver **Goldsmith** (1889-91) DSO ADC MiD RIM, Lt Charles Ross **Campbell** (1890-92) DSO MVO ADC (also Lt Col RE) and Cdr Anthony **Hamilton** (1886-88) DSO RIM were MiD on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1916 by General Sir John Nixon for operations at Kut-el-Amara (Kut).

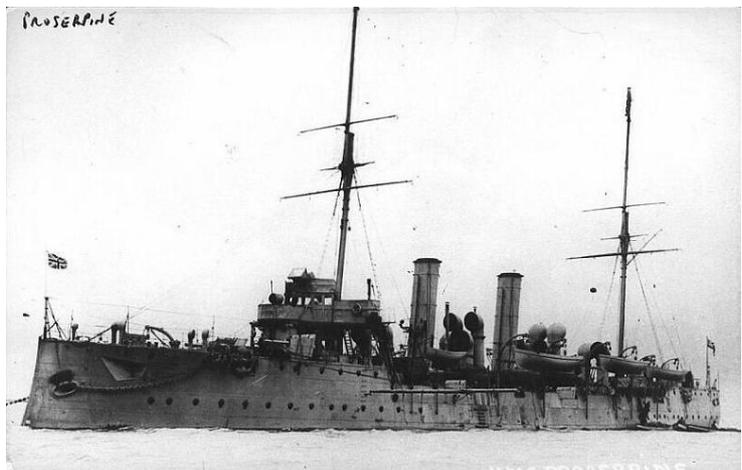
1915 October 20<sup>th</sup> Cdr Anthony **Hamilton** (1887-88) was gazetted and awarded the DSO *"for distinguished service in the field"* and in November he was MiD with the same citation. The exact place of his service is not mentioned.

1915 Nov With its forces and supply routes overstretched disaster struck. Troops under General Townsend's suffered a major defeat at Ctesiphon (25 miles south of Baghdad) and was forced back to Kut where he was encircled and besieged through the winter of 1915-16. See below. 20,000 Indian troops died in botched relief attacks. Lack of water borne transport was a major constraint on relief attempts.



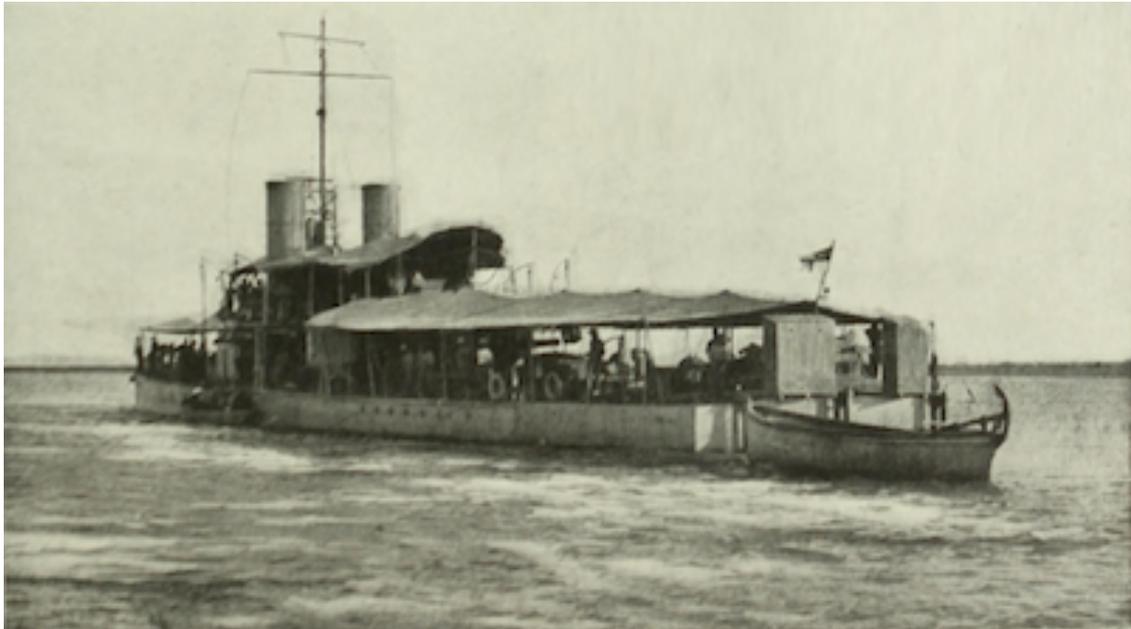
1916 Apr An attempt to re-supply the town by river was made using the paddle steamer *Julnar*, a 900-ton, 210-ft long river paddle steamer built in 1908 by E. Rennie and Co. of Greenwich, London, for the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company and the fastest vessel on the river. It failed and she was sunk. There was then no way the British could resupply Kut and the 13,164 strong Kut garrison eventually surrendered to the Turks. It was the Britain's greatest humiliation in WWI. The Indian Government and army were censured for their rash attempts to take Baghdad without sufficient front line troops or adequate supply arrangements. At the same time the disaster at Gallipoli meant Russia remained in dire need of support and it was quickly realised that Mesopotamia and its rivers provided a supply route from the Mediterranean/Gulf to Russia. The Mesopotamia Commission was set up by Parliament to inquire into the origins, inception and conduct of operations of war in Mesopotamia, particularly the lack of appropriate transport and equipment for troops on the frontline. The politicians in the War Committee ordered the War Office in London to take control of the Mesopotamia campaign and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) took charge personally.

1916 Jan 10<sup>th</sup> Vice Admiral Richard Edmund Charles **Peirse** (1873-75) KCB KBE MVO DL RN was Commander in Chief (CinC) of the East Indies Station commanding RN vessels supporting the Mesopotamian Campaign. From his flagship, the Pelorus class cruiser



*Propserine*, shown above. He wrote a report on the attack on Ctesiphon and subsequent withdrawal to The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

- 1916 Jul The CIGS despatched General Sir Percy Henry Noel Lake KCB KCMG as the new CinC Land Forces. He replaced all the force's senior officers, strongly reinforced the number of troops, fundamentally restructured the force and renamed it the Mesopotamia Force (MF). A small fleet of RN Insect class river gunboats was added to the MF.



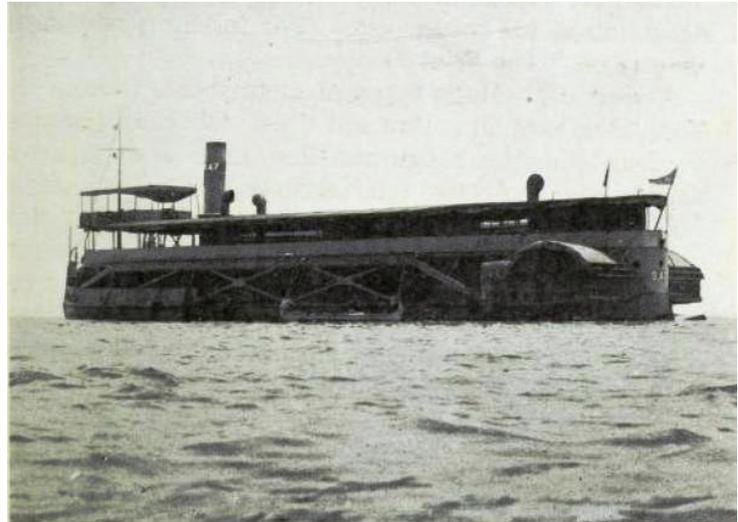
*A RN River Gunboat On The Tigris 1915*

The Mesopotamian campaign soon took on a new, almost mythical role; restoring Mesopotamia to her historic prosperity - a military campaign transformed into an exercise in nation building. The wanton destruction wrought by imperial tyrants since the Mongol invasion would be brought to an end and the tradition of the Persians, Seleucids, Parthians, Sassanids and the Saracen caliphs would be restored in a new nation, Iraq, but with Britain firmly in control of its oil. George Buchanan an engineer sent from India to improve port facilities explained *"it was taken for granted that at the end of the campaign Mesopotamia would become a British possession, probably controlled from India"*. Indeed Churchill went so far as to venture that post war oil revenues from the region would pay all the UK's war costs.

- 1916 Jul The Mesopotamia Commission arrived from the UK to determine the force's needs for river borne transportation and supply. They observed that while *'a river is generally regarded as an admirable line of communication'*, the Tigris was in a class all its own: in the memorable words of the CinC, *'a very fickle lady who never sleeps two nights running in the same bed'*. The key requirements for the Tigris and the Euphrates were a shallow draft (because of the constant danger of running aground and incurring damage on the numerous sandbanks), large capacities for materiel and troops, strength for towing heavily loaded barges and power to counter the strong river currents. Amongst the commission's recommendations were the S40 and HS13 classes of quarter-wheelers i.e. paddle vessels with paddles mounted on their stern quarters. They were modifications of the quarter-wheelers of Richard Lander class used on the

River Niger. They were built on the Clyde and either towed out from the UK or shipped in kit form to Bombay or Basra for reassembly by a force of 6,000 Chinese recruited from Shandong province. The 12 vessels of the HS class were river hospital ships and the 11 vessels of the S40 Class were cargo/troop carriers that also acted as tugs. They were 150' long, 34'10" wide, drew just over 4', their engines developed 63 nominal horsepower and could carry 46 tons of fuel, 100 tons of cargo and 150 troops. They had a tumble-home of 1'9" thus obviating damage to upper works by contact with barges. They had fixed floats on their paddles which, though they detracted about 10 per cent from their speed, considerably

reduced their repair bills as there were no bushes to renew. One of the class, S47 later the *Ihsam* is shown right. She was built by the Ailsa Shipbuilding Company at Ayr or Troon and her engine came from George Brown and Company of Greenock. The PA (paddle ambulance) class of river ambulance paddle ships was also commissioned. They were also known by the designation HP, hospital paddle ship.



Above: *Ihsam*  
Right: *Hughes*



1916 Jul 31<sup>st</sup> Following the Commission's report to the War Office a committee of three senior officers was sent to Mesopotamia to plan the implementation of the Commission's recommendations. One of those officers was Maj Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) CMG CB DSO RD RE & RIM. He was therefore to have a significant role in the creation, operation and eventual success of the IWT.

1916 Aug The CIGS appointed General Sir Frederick Stanley Maude, then in command of the frontline Tigris Corps to replace General Lake as CinC of the MF. He restructured his forces, I and III Indian Corps, British, Gurkha and other units, as the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force (MEF). His orders were to hold his existing line and do nothing that might draw troops or materiel from the Western Front. A secret part of his orders forbade him from attempting to capture Baghdad. His assessment was that *"the enemy's plan appeared to be to contain our main forces on the Tigris, while a vigorous campaign, which would directly threaten India, was being developed in Persia. There were indications, too, of an impending move down the Euphrates toward Nasariyeh. It seemed clear from the outset that the true solution of the problem was a resolute offensive, with concentrated forces, on the Tigris, thus effectively threatening Baghdad, the centre from which the enemy's columns were operating"* In short he would ignore his orders and fight his way north along the Tigris removing the Turks from their strongly fortified positions while his troops were supplied and supported by river. Operations commenced on this basis.

## 2 WORLD WAR I – THE IWT YEARS 1916-1919

1916 Sep 6<sup>th</sup> **Hughes** and his two colleagues set up the Inland Water Transport Department (IWT), also known as The Indus Flotilla, as a new specialist naval force to provide river borne troop transport, re-supply and casualty evacuation for the MEF's land forces. Most importantly, the RIM was relieved to focus on its primary role at sea keeping the Gulf and seas around India open for allied shipping and for providing deep sea transports for men and materiel.

Realising the huge challenges presented by river based support for major offensive land operations and supply of Russia, the IWT's first task was to create major shipbuilding and repair, dockyard, port and wharf facilities along both rivers, to improve the navigations through dams and canals and to set up a robust system of buoyage, pilotage, bandalling<sup>1</sup> and dredging. With this massive engineering focus the CIGS made the Mesopotamian IWT part of the British army's Royal Engineer Corps' Inland Water Transport and Docks Section already operating in the UK, France and Belgium. Many RIM facilities, e.g. Basra Dockyard, and 307 vessels were transferred to the IWT. Senior RIM officers were posted back to the RIM but all other officers and men were given the choice to return to the RIM or serve in the IWT as military officers for the duration with their RIM ranks preserved. 192 officers accepted the offer and, at a stroke RIM, officers and ratings became soldiers for the duration and were given military ranks, e.g., Lt Commanders (Cdr) RIM were suddenly Majors RE and wearing army uniforms with the RE cap badge shown right. Some RIM officers were already on loan from the Bengal Pilot Service (BPS) so career Senior Pilots suddenly found themselves in the RIM and on loan to the British army in the RE! The IWT became a stand alone navy and by the end of September it had 7,171 personnel. At its peak it had over 50,000 men of all nationalities including men from the RIM, BPS, the British West India Regiment, the Nigerian Marine, the Mauritius Labour Battalion, the West African Contingent, the Egyptian Labour Corps and the so-called "Coloured Section" of the RE. A further 40,000 skilled and unskilled labourers were recruited from India and China. All were transported into Mesopotamia by sea, carried inland and then supplied by the IWT. When the IWT was formed 367 non-native vessels were in commission in Mesopotamia; when Baghdad was captured, 744; in December 1917, 1,299; and by the armistice, 1,634 vessels. These included 134 transports, at least 12 hospital ships, numerous ambulance river paddle ships, 134 dumb barges and 95 motor boats supported by thousands of commandeered small native craft adapted into *"a curious sort of miniature battleship fitted with old Ford car engines, iron plating and heavy guns, each converted into a new weapon of war. Eyewitnesses remarked on this picturesque and peculiar flotilla and the quaint sight of the uniformed tommies and sepoy's learning ... how to punt"*.



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<sup>1</sup> Bandalling is the process of laying bamboo mats and wire netting to divert water from shoals and sides channels into the main channel.

The wharves at Abadan, Magil and Basra, became a hive of industry as the IWT poured in equipment and supplies of every kind, including iron sheets to line the embankments, machinery from Calcutta, 9,000 miles of telegraph cable, 200 railway engines, thousands of



Above: Magil Docks Slipway on the Euphrates

vehicles, shiploads of timber and iron-work to build the new landing stages and wharves, steel, railways, pontoons and bridge-work, and dredgers for digging canals. Everything arrived by sea through Basra and was transported upriver by the IWT. By the end of the war the IWT was delivering 3,000 tons of materiel a day along 500 miles of river although the supply route to Russia was never needed as Russia was effectively out of the war before Mesopotamia was conquered.

1916 Feb 25<sup>th</sup> Lt Col Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) DSO RD RE and RIM was put in command of IWT forward transports for the advance on Baghdad. He immediately set about creating a series of advance supply and ammunition bases along the river pressing every available vessel into service to accomplish this. Larger steamers and paddle ships towed convoys of dumb barges along the lower deeper parts of the river to Ezra's Tomb and Kurna with river tugs taking them forward inland through the upper shallower sections to Kut. They operated around the clock leading to many night-time groundings.

Eustace Oliver **Knowles** (08-09) joined the RIM at Calcutta, was posted to Mesopotamia and transferred to the RE for service in the IWT. Details of his initial service are not known but he was MiD by General Maude.

1916 Aug 24<sup>th</sup> Capt Willoughby Raynes **Huddleston** (1880-82) RIM, Lt Cdr Henry Philip **Hughes-Hallett** (05-07) MBE DSC MiD RIM, Lt Alban Rohere Castleton **Poyntz** (02-03) and Lt Charles Arthur **Scott** (1895-96) were MiD by Lt-Gen Sir Percy Lake KCB, General Officer Commanding, Indian Expeditionary Force D. They were gazetted as serving in the River Transport Service.

1916 Dec Maude advanced along both banks of the Tigris and reported in a despatch that *"The Hai position (on the Tigris) was seized with little difficulty in the middle of December"*.

1916 Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> Lt Charles Arthur **Scott** (1895-96) was awarded the DSO *"for services rendered in connection with military operations in the field in Mesopotamia ..."*



1917 Feb Following a strongly opposed crossing of the Tigris at the 340' wide Shuman Bend and attacks on the strongholds of Sannaiyat, Nakhailat and Suwade the all important peninsula city of Kut was recaptured. In some measure the ignominy of the earlier British surrender there was assuaged.

The MEF harried the retreating Turks northwards and operations were widened to stem threats from Turkish forces on the Euphrates and Diyala rivers.

1917 Mar 3<sup>rd</sup> Richard Hart **Garstin** (00-02) was made a Temporary Major in the RE IWT.

1917 Mar 11<sup>th</sup> Baghdad was captured and the gunboat flotilla, proceeded upstream and anchored off the British Residency. It was *'the first big place we've taken in this war'*, an event hailed as *'the most triumphant piece of strategy ... since war started'*.

Maude's despatch to London observed that *"the gunboat flotilla, proceeding upstream full speed ahead, came under very heavy fire at the closest range from guns, machine guns and rifles, to which it replied vigorously. In spite of casualties and damage to the vessels, the flotilla held on its course past the rear guard position, and did*



Above: Maude Enters Baghdad

*considerable execution among the enemy's retreating columns. Further upstream many of the enemy's craft were struggling to get away, and the Royal Navy pressed forward in pursuit. The hostile vessels were soon within easy range, and several surrendered, including the armed tug Sumana, which had been captured at Kut when that place fell. The Turkish steamer Basra, full of troops and wounded, surrendered when brought to by a shell which killed and wounded some German machine gunners. HMS Firefly, captured from us during the retreat from Ctesiphon in 1915, kept up a running fight, but, after being hit several times, she fell into our hands, the enemy making an unsuccessful attempt to set fire to her magazine. The Pioneer, badly hit by our fire, was also taken, as well as some barges laden with munitions. Our gunboats were in touch with and shelled the retreating enemy during most of the 27<sup>th</sup>."* His succession of victories led public opinion to see him as the most successful British commander of the war so the CIGS was obliged to allow him to continue his advances even though he was deliberately disobeying his orders.

Lt Col Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) DSO RD RE and RIM arrived at 6pm on the 11<sup>th</sup> with orders to set up the IWT's Forward Area Office in Baghdad as the HQ of the local Assistant Director, for creating supply bases next to the river and for discharging and loading of craft on both banks. By the end of March he had control of 744 vessels.

1917 Apr Maude triumphed again at Samarra, Ramadi and Tikrit but then halted his advance as his supply lines were too long, conditions in the summer made campaigning difficult and he had been denied needed reinforcements.

1917 May Lt Col Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) DSO RD RE and RIM was recalled to Basra and promoted to Brig-Gen to relieve Brig-Gen Grey as Director of the IWT.

1917 Aug 10<sup>th</sup> Lt Alban Rohere Castleton **Poyntz** (02-03) was awarded the DSC *"in recognition of zeal, devotion to duty and gallantry while serving in river steamers for long periods during operations in Mesopotamia"*. As his citation does not mention the IWT it is possible he was serving in the RIM Sea Transport Service, Mesopotamia.

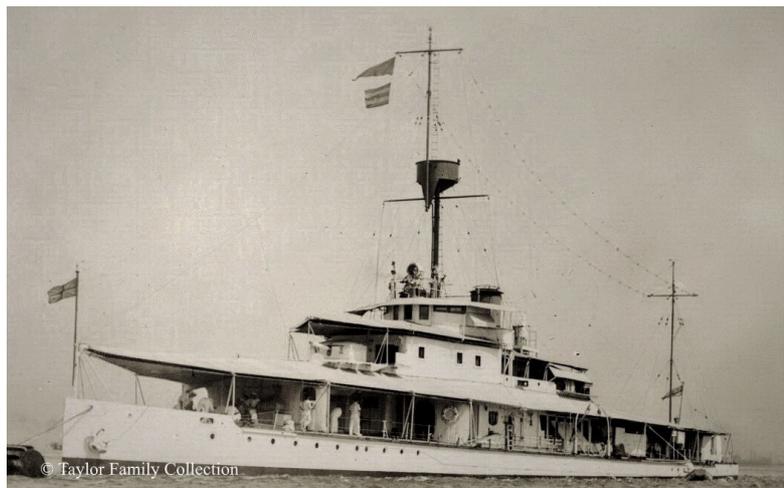
Henry Philip **Hughes-Hallett** (05-07) Lt Cdr MBE DSC MiD RIM was awarded the DSO for operations in Mesopotamia. No specific citation was given.

1917 Aug 15<sup>th</sup> Sub-Lt (Acting Lt) John Patrick **Bradley** (06-08), Capt Ernst George **Carre** (1886-88) MN, Capt Raymond Henry **Coope** (1869-71) MN, Lt Richard Joseph A **Harding** (05-078) RNVR, Lt Thomas Maxwell Stuart **Milne-Henderson**, (05-07) RE CIE OBE, Capt Richard Edward **Shone** (1880-82) MN and Capt Lionel William Richard Tufnell **Turbett** (00-01) RIM OBE were MiD by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB. Based on a report by Capt Wilfred Nunn, commanding the Tigris Flotilla: *"Lt Bradley did very good work by taking a captured Turkish steamer down river to Basra with Enemy wounded"*.

1917 Aug 25<sup>th</sup> Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) DSO RD RE and RIM was awarded the CMG *"for services rendered in connection with military operations in the field in Mesopotamia to date 04/06/17"*.

1917 Aug 27<sup>th</sup> Lt Col Charles Ross **Campbell** (1890-92) RE, Cdr B H **Jones** RIM and Cdr William Kirkwood **Thyne** (1890-92) were MiD by Lt-Gen Sir Percy Lake for actions since the fall of Kut.

1917 Sep 21<sup>st</sup> Sub-Lt (Acting Lt) John Patrick **Bradley** (06-08) RN serving in the Insect class gunboat *Tarantula* was awarded the DSC *"For coolness under fire on all occasions" during a series of engagements en route to Baghdad.*



Above: Bradley's *Tarantula*

1917 Oct The MEF continued north until they routed the Turks near Mosul.

1917 Nov 18<sup>th</sup> Maude was struck down with cholera, probably via contaminated milk (not by poisoning as was speculated by some at the time) and died. General William Raine Marshall, commander of one of the MEF's columns, was appointed to

replace him and the CIGS ordered operations scaled back effecting suspending hostilities for the winter.

- 1917 Dec 28<sup>th</sup> George Thomas **Labey** (02-04), a Branch Pilot, BPS was serving (on loan) as a Temporary (T) Lt (Acting (A) Capt) RE in Mesopotamia. He was awarded the Military Cross but no specific citation has been discovered.
- 1918 Jan 1<sup>st</sup> Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) CMG DSO RD RE & RIM was awarded the CSI *"for services rendered in connection with military operations in the field in Mesopotamia to date"* while serving as the IWT's Director.
- 1918 Feb The offensive was re-started and Hit and Khan-al-Baghdadi were captured but the campaign in Mesopotamia was not really needed any more. Troops were diverted east to the Sinai and Palestine campaigns and west to the Persian campaign. Marshall's very powerful army was *"astonishingly inactive, not only in the hot season but through most of the cold"*.
- 1918 Mar 8<sup>th</sup> Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) DSO RD RE and RIM was MiD by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB Commander- in Chief, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force for *"distinguished and gallant services and devotion to duty I consider deserving of special mention"*. Capt Lionel William Richard Tufnell **Turbett** (00-01) RIM OBE and Lt Cdr Hubert Mainwaring Keir **Moilliet** (1892-94) RIM were gazetted at the same time.
- 1918 May 4<sup>th</sup> Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) DSO RD RE and RIM was Director of the IWT but was seconded to Egypt for a short period.
- 1918 Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> Lt Col Charles Ross **Campbell** (1890-92) RE was awarded the DSO for meritorious services in Mesopotamia. At that time he was a Temporary Lt Col RE and Temporary Lt Cdr RIM. On the same day Lt Reginald Dundas **Merriman** (04-05) was also awarded the DSC for *"valuable services in connection with the defence of Kut-Al-Amara"*. He was serving with the IWT and his role was to move personnel, material and armament.
- 1918 Aug 27<sup>th</sup> Lt Cdr (Temp Cdr) Lionel William Richard Tufnell **Turbett** (00-01) RIM OBE, Temp Major Richard **Garstin** (00-02), Capt Eustace Oliver **Knowles** RE (08-09) and Lt Col Charles Ross **Campbell** (1890-92) RE were MiD by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI .
- 1918 Sep 25<sup>th</sup> Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) DSO RD RE and RIM returned from Egypt to his post as Director of the IWT.
- 1918 Oct With armistice terms being negotiated from London Marshall was ordered by the War Office to make *"every effort was to be made to score as heavily as possible on the Tigris before the whistle blew"*. The army advanced 120 kilometres and beat the Turks at Sharqat.
- 1918 Oct 30<sup>th</sup> General Marshall accepted the surrender of all Turkish forces bringing the Mesopotamia campaign to an end. However to Turkish protests the armistice was breached and the MEF continued to advance and occupied Mosul and its rich oilfields on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

1918 Nov 11<sup>th</sup> Lt Cdr Hubert Mainwaring Keir **Moilliet** (1892-94) RIM, Capt Ernst George **Carre** (1886-88) MN and Raymond Henry **Coope** (1869-71) MN were MiD by Lt-Gen Sir W R Marshall KCB KCSI.

At the cease fire the following were still serving on the Staff of the IWT:

- Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) CMG CSI CSO DSO RD RE and RIM was Director.
- Lt Col Charles Ross **Campbell** (1890-92) RE DSO was Assistant Director of Personnel.
- Commodore Richard **Garstin** (00-02) RIN, Lt Col RE and Commodore RNR, OBE, CBE, CdeG was Assistant Director of Norperforce (?).
- Lt Cdr Hubert Mainwaring Keir **Moilliet** (1892-94) RIM OBE was Assistant Director at Baghdad.
- Commodore Thomas Maxwell Stuart **Milne-Henderson** (05-07) RIM CIE, OBE (and Maj RE) was Deputy Assistant Director at Kut.

1918 Nov 18<sup>th</sup> Capt Eustace Oliver **Knowles** RE (08-09) was still serving in the IWT in an operational post and was MiD by General Marshall and awarded the OBE Military Division for "*distinguished services in connection with military operations in Mesopotamia*".

### 3 THE INTER-WAR PERIOD - 1919 to 1939

1919 The British formed the British Mandate For Mesopotamia and imported Indian civil servants to establish an orderly administration for the region. Sir Percy Cox was appointed High Commissioner. Turkey objected that the region was historically and culturally part of Turkey but their claims came to naught in the face of local Arab uprisings which eventually led to the formation of the independent republic of Iraq.

Although some troops remained to garrison the region, with the war over the IWT's and **Hughes's** role reversed. Instead of delivering troops and material upriver from the coast they now had to evacuate the MEF (men, casualties and all materiel) downriver to the coast for return home. The IWT had to continue in being but the bulk of its fleet was superfluous so dispersal started. Nine paddle steamers were sent to Russia to take part in operations against the Bolshevik government. The S50 class was sold. S51 went to the North West Railway, Karachi. S52, by then known as the *Kalgah*, was destroyed by fire 40 miles below Ahwaz, on the Karun River in Persia (Iran) in September 1942 after having been operated by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company since 1924. In his after campaign report Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) CMG CSI CSO DSO RD RE and RIM speculated whether the Euphrates and Tigris navigations would survive without the constant attention lavished on them by the IWT. He noted that some of the upper reaches of the rivers and their tributaries had already become un-navigable as bandalling had been discontinued.

1919 Feb 7<sup>th</sup> Capt Lionel William Richard Tufnell **Turbett** (00-01) RIM OBE was MiD for the fourth time in this instance by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI. Temp Maj Thomas Maxwell Stuart **Milne-Henderson** (05-07) RE CIE OBE was gazetted at the same time.

1919 Feb 20<sup>th</sup> Acting Maj Richard Hart **Garstin** RE (00-02) was promoted to T/Lt Col. and appointed Assistant Director of Inland Water Transport (Class X).

1919 Mar After 5½ years continuous service in Mesopotamia Eustace Oliver **Knowles** OBE (08-09) returned to the UK on leave.

1919 Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) CMG CSI CSO DSO RD RE and RIM reported that almost all RIM officers and men had now been released back to the RIM. Their work was no-longer necessary, was still needed but simply discontinued as war receded, or had been handed over to native staff or manpower brought in from India - post war Mesopotamia's place in the British Empire was to be an offshoot of India.

1920 Mar 3<sup>rd</sup> Capt Eustace Oliver **Knowles** OBE (08-09) arrived back on Basra, went into hospital in 9th and crossed the bar on the 11th. He was buried at Basra.

1920 Apr Thomas Henry **Hudson** (07-09), serving as a Major RE on loan from the RIM, was in the UK on leave "*after prolonged service in Mesopotamia*".

1920 Dec **Labey's** (02-04) promotion to Captain RE was confirmed.

1921 Temp Brig-Gen Robert Wilfred Herbert **Hughes** (1885-87) CMG CSI CSO DSO RD RE and RIM was awarded the CB.

Following widespread revolts against British rule, particularly along and between the two rivers, the British Mandate For Mesopotamia became The Kingdom of Iraq under British Administration, aka "Mandatory Iraq". Too much oil had been discovered for Britain to give the region up.

1922 Oct 1<sup>st</sup> All British troops in the region including the residual IWT came under RAF control and were redesignated RAF Iraq Command with main bases at Basra and at Al Habbaniyah. Where once the port had supporting army power the importance of air power to the rule of Iraq now made Baghdad the 'Clapham Junction of the air'.

1923 The S40 class of cargo/troop carriers was disposed of:

- S44 and S45 were sent to Bombay and sold.
- The newer S48, 49 and 50 went to Egypt for service on the Nile.
- S46, renamed *Jhelum*, and S51 joined the Lloyd Barrage project, the world's biggest irrigation project at Sukkur some 300 miles north of Karachi, constructing a barrage on the Indus River and seven canals to provide for the agriculture of the Punjab and Baluchistan. *Jhelum* was wrecked in 1994 while operating as a ferry at Dik, Pakistan.
- S47 remained in Iraq. In 1924, renamed *Ihsan*, she was operated by the Euphrates & Tigris Steam Navigation Company and from 1951 by Hanna Shaikh River Transport Company of Basra. She was deleted from the Lloyds Register in 1955.

1926 Frederick Henry Wickham **Guard** (03-04) Col RE, Sqn Ldr RAF CMG, DSO, CdeG was appointed to command the IWT. In WWI he had served with distinction on the Western Front and in Russia. In 1922 he transferred to the RAF and served in Iraq commanding an armoured car squadron in Basra. He was then transferred to the IWT. He contracted pneumonia complicated by malaria and was invalided back to the UK where he crossed the bar on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1927 at Romsey, Hampshire.



1926 July The Secretary of State (Air) replying to questions in the House of Commons reported that the IWT now employed 81 British, 481 Indians and 675 Iraqis and that the main role of the force was to supply the RAF. With increasing volumes of traffic being carried by rail he also confirmed that it was the intended to dispose of the entire fleet in due course.

1933 or 1934 RAF Iraq Command was renamed the British Forces in Iraq, now consisting of a few small British bases with the IWT responsible for a much diminished role of transporting men and materiel by river. Pilotage, buoyage and navigation maintenance had reverted to Iraqi control.

1937 Few British troops remained in Iraq and the IWT there was essentially moribund although at least one of its gunboats the *Cockchafer* remained in service and the IWT continued as an element of the British Royal Engineers.

#### 4 WORLD WAR II - THE NEW IWT - 1939 TO 1945

1940 Mar Given Iraq's natural antipathy to British involvement in their country and following a minor coup, the new Iraqi government aligned itself with Germany and Italy. Approximately 2,000 British troops remained in Iraq to safeguard oil supplies and others continued to be transported through the country en-route to Palestine although the rump IWT's role in this is not known.

Commodore Richard **Garstin** (00-02) RIN (and Lt Col RE and Commodore RNR) OBE, CBE, CdeG was appointed Naval Officer in command of the port of Basra. He had been here before as part of the IWT in WWI.

1941 Apr 10<sup>th</sup> Churchill decided that Iraq had to be subdued - too much oil was at stake. so a decision was taken to exploit our treaty rights with Iraq and assemble substantial numbers of troops from India ready for a concerted push inland to secure Iraq's oil supplies for Britain. As in 1914, the RN East Indies Station and the RIN provided naval and sea transport forces in the Gulf and Indian Ocean. The Royal Indian Engineers (RIE) were tasked to re-establish the IWT to re-open the waterways and provide a transport service from the coast and up the rivers to support advancing troops. The new IWT would also operate in Egypt and Burma. Land forces from India, designated Iraqforce under the command of Maj-Gen W Fraser, were despatched for Basra with orders to occupy the Basra-Shabai area to ensure the safe disembarkation of further reinforcements and to enable a base to be established in that area. They were accompanied by the aircraft carrier *Hermes*, the cruisers *Emerald* and New Zealand's *Leander*, plus *Cockchafer*, *Falmouth* and *Seabell*. RIN vessels were also present including the minesweeping sloop *Lawrence* which had been in the Gulf in 1914, see 1914 Oct above. Serving in *Lawrence* was Lt Cdr Henry Ellis **Passmore-Edwards** (15-16) RINR. He was MiD on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1942 "*for courage, enterprise and devotion to duty in operations in the Persian Gulf*".

1941 Apr 17<sup>th</sup> The fleet of warships and troopships entered the Shatt-el-Arab and moved on the port of Basra. Over the rest of that month large numbers of British and Indian troops were landed and moved to temporary assembly camps.

1941 Jun The IWT dredged the rivers and, as in WWI, 20 decrepit old paddle steamers and other vessels were found on the Hooghly and its tributaries. They were all given a hasty overhaul and crews formed from a mix of RIN and RINR officers and ratings, RINVR officers from the UK and seamen recruited in India. They were provided with only the charts needed for their transit, a sextant, chronometer, telescope and few geometrical instruments, and then were despatched to India from the Bay of Bengal in groups of two or three vessels for mutual support. They were armed with a few old .303 rifles but these were not sufficient to prevent one being sunk by a Japanese submarine. They were river craft and only capable of five knots at sea and so hugged the coast around India all the way. They had to stop several times each day to re-tighten the paddle wheels mountings which kept working loose in the heavy seas.

1941 May 2<sup>nd</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> With sufficient troops and aircraft on the ground Britain launched the Anglo Iraq War, initially as an air campaign. The Germans responded by moving troops and aircraft to Mosul in the north and began shipping in huge quantities of supplies and armaments to the Iraqis. The French entered Iraq from Syria and the Italians joined the Germans. The campaign now began to resemble the

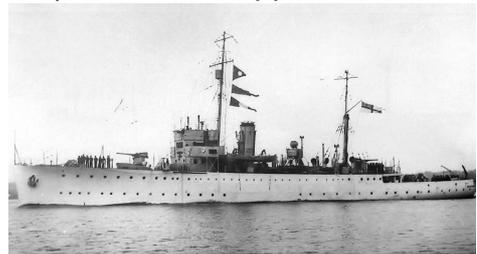
WWI strategy as shown on the map in Section 1 above. Three thrusts were planned:

1. General Wavell started to push north from Egypt through Palestine.
2. Fraser split his troops into the Tigris Brigade and the Euphrates Brigade to advance up the rivers towards Baghdad. Progress was slow as the waterways were in poor condition, bridges were down and there was extensive flooding. Sgt Foster Wilson **Black** (35-37) RAFVR served in 44 Sqn RAF across the Middle East
3. A third Anglo-Russian force would strike into Persia. As in WWI, planners realised that the Tigris/Euphrates rivers were a strategic route for the supply of Russia now Britain's ally.

Fraser very quickly overpowered Iraqi forces and deposed their government. Germany's and Italy's contribution was limited by the fierce fighting in Crete and Russia.

1941 Jun 1<sup>st</sup> A pro-British Government and was established and an ally of Britain placed on the throne. The region's vast oil supplies were secured for the allies although axis forces remained a threat with concerns they could counter-attack towards Egypt or into India. Considerable numbers of troops therefore garrisoned the region but it actually remained a backwater for the rest of the war.

1941 Jul 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Cdr Henry Ellis **Passmore-Edwards** (15-16) RINR was appointed to command the sloop *Lawrence* (U83) seen right. He remained in her until 11<sup>th</sup> January 1942.



1941 Aug 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>: T/Lt Harold James **Gahan** (22-24), in command in *Lilavati*, participated in Operation Dover, the capture of Abadan. His role in sub Operation Crackler was to land troops at Abadan. At 0840hrs on 24<sup>th</sup> *Lilavati* embarked 288 men of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Rajputana Rifles and 15 men of the 5<sup>th</sup> Field Company Sappers and Miners at Pier 11A at Basra. At 0045hrs on 25<sup>th</sup> she cast off from the pier and followed *Ihsan*, *Zenobia* and *Seabelle* along the river to Abadan. Troops were landed under hostile fire; **Gahan** was Mentioned in Despatches and three of his crew were awarded the DSM. *Lilavati* was then ordered to patrol the river between Khurramshahr and Seeba. She remained on the Basra patrol until 30<sup>th</sup> December 1941 when she moved to Karachi and it is assumed **Gahan** left her for a new appointment.

1942 Mar 6<sup>th</sup> Commodore Richard **Garstin** (00-02) RIN (and Lt Col RE and Commodore RNR) OBE, CBE, CdeG was awarded the CBE for services in connection with the Anglo-Russian invasion of Persia.

At least two OCs served in the new IWT:

- Garrick George **Franklin** (22-24) was serving in the IWT's service at Tobruk and the Western Desert.
- James **Colquhoun** (23-25) was serving on loan to the RIE's IWT service as a 14<sup>th</sup> Army river pilot in Burma, sailing "up the Narf (Naf) River under the Japs' noses as they held the right bank of the river at the time". He was the literally the first to land with General Stockwell at Taungup after two and a half years of Japanese occupation.

## 5 LIST OF OCs IN THE WWI IWT

The following OCs' names have been discovered to date. Two **Guard** and **Hughes** commanded the unit. Each individual's *Conway* years are in parentheses. Ranks are the most senior discovered for each individual. MiD is Mentioned in Despatches.

1. **Bradley**, John Patrick (06-08). Sub-Lt (Acting Lt) RNR MiD. He was MiD on 15<sup>th</sup> Aug 1917 by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB. Based on a report by Capt Wilfred Nunn, commanding the Tigris Flotilla: "*Lt Bradley did very good work by taking a captured Turkish steamer down river to Basra with Enemy wounded*". On 21<sup>st</sup> Sep 1917 while serving in the Insect class gunboat *Tarantula* he was awarded the DSC "*For coolness under fire on all occasions*" during a series of engagements en route to Baghdad.
2. **Campbell**, Charles Ross (1890-92) Lt Col RE and Capt RIM DSO MVO ADC MiD. He was MiD on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1916 by General Sir John Nixon for operations at Amara between 31<sup>st</sup> May and 4<sup>th</sup> June 1915. On 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug 1918 he was awarded the DSO for meritorious services in Mesopotamia and on 27<sup>th</sup> he was MiD by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI. Believed to have crossed the bar in Bristol in March 1955.
3. **Garstin**, Richard (00-02). Commodore RIN, Lt Col RE and Commodore RNR, OBE, CBE, CdeG. Son of Catherine Emily Hamilton and Rev. William Fitzroy Garstin, Rector of St. Luke's Belfast, Rector of Cornwall (Lettkenny, Co. Donegal), later Archdeacon of Raphoe. He joined the RIM in 1907. On 27<sup>th</sup> August 1918 while a temporary Major RE he was MiD by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI. He served in Mesopotamia again in WWII becoming the Naval Officer in command of the port of Basra. He was awarded the CBE for services in connection with the Anglo-Russian invasion of Persia. On 27<sup>th</sup> Oct 1942 he was killed in action aged 56 while serving as Commodore RNR in SS *Stentor* and sailing as Vice Commodore of Convoy SL-125. The convoy was en route from Lagos and Freetown, West Africa to Liverpool. *Stentor* was carrying a cargo of about 6,000 tons of West African produce when she was torpedoed by German submarine U-509 and sunk NW of the Canary Islands at 29°13'N, 20°53'W - Grid DH 7531. She was hit by one torpedo on the starboard side at the bulkhead between holds No., 2 and No., 3. The palm oil stored in the deep tank was thrown up by the explosion a survivor reported that "it erupted into a huge fountain that shot high in the air. It was on fire when it came back down", pouring into the passengers' accommodation and setting the forward holds and bridge on fire. The men on the bridge were either killed or badly burned and had to be assisted to reach their lifeboat stations. Richard was badly burned and was led to a lifeboat by the ship's doctor. The ship suddenly sank by the bow about eight minutes after being hit and the boat carrying the injured master capsized, drowning almost all occupants. From a total of 235 on board 44 persons were lost including Richard, 20 crew members, three army personnel, four nurses and 15 passengers. He is commemorated on the Liverpool Naval Memorial.
4. **Goldsmith**, Oliver (1889-91) Capt DSO ADC MiD RIM. He was MiD on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1916 by General Sir John Nixon for operations at Mesopotamia. Along with Hamilton he was the first OC recognised in the campaign. He was MiD again on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1916 by General Sir John Nixon for operations at Amara between 31<sup>st</sup> May and 4<sup>th</sup> June 1915. On 26<sup>th</sup> June 1897 while in RIMS *Mayo* he rescued the surviving passengers and crew of P&O's SS *Aden* from certain death off Cape Redressa, Sumatra. He was awarded the thanks of the Governor General (equivalent to the thanks of Parliament) for his "*able seamanship and personal gallantry*".

5. **Guard**, Frederick Henry, Wickham (03-04). Lt Col RE, Sqn Ldr RAF. CMG, DSO, CdeG. In WWI he had served with distinction on the Western Front and in Russia where he was judged “a born guerrilla leader”. In 1922 he transferred to the RAF and served in Iraq commanding an armoured car squadron in Basra. He was then appointed to command the IWT. He contracted pneumonia complicated by malaria and was invalided back to the UK where he crossed the bar on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1927 at Romsey, Hampshire. His medals, shown below, were later sold for £8,800.00. In *Conway* he was a member of the 1904 winning gig crew in the annual race against HMS *Worcester* - see photo right. His rowing was “a little troubled with his legs and his back which he does not always know how to dispose of”. His racing weight was 11st 5lbs and his height 6’ 1”.



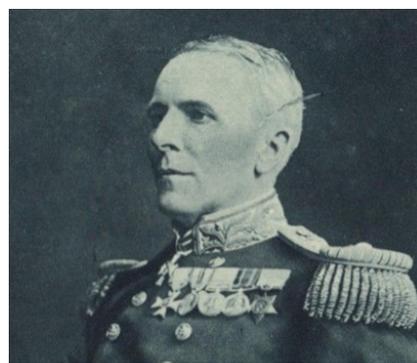
6. **Hamilton**, Anthony (1886-88) Cdr DSO RIM. Masefield claims he was Alfred Henry John Hamilton (1893-95) but other references all give his name as Anthony. He was MiD on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1916 by General Sir John Nixon for operations at Mesopotamia. Along with Goldsmith he was the first OC recognised in the campaign. He was MiD again on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1916 by General Sir John Nixon for operations at Amara between 31<sup>st</sup> May and 4<sup>th</sup> June 1915.
7. **Harding**, Richard Joseph A (05-08) Lt RNVR MiD. On 15<sup>th</sup> Aug 1917 he was MiD by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB.
8. **Harold**, Austin Edward DSO (1887-89). Capt RIN and Col RE. DSO.
9. **Huddleston** Willoughby Raynes (1880-82) Capt CMG MiD RIM. He was MiD on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1916 and 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 1916 for unspecified services in the River Transport Service. In 1892 while serving in the RIM was awarded the Stanhope Gold Medal through the Royal Humane Society (RHS). It was awarded at the end of every year for the most conspicuous act out of all those receiving RHS awards in the year. His vessel the RIMS *Investigator* (a twin paddle survey steamer) was in the Bay of Bengal when the Gunner, having just hooked a large shark, fell overboard into shark infested waters. Without hesitation Willoughby jumped into the water to rescue him knowing that the Gunner could not swim. Only after some struggle to get the Gunner back on board, and with the sharks turning their attention to him, did Willoughby think of his own safety and scramble out of the water.
10. **Hudson**, Thomas Henry (07-09). Major RE.
11. **Hughes**, Robert Wilfred Herbert (1885-87) Temp Brig-Gen CB CSI CSO DSO LdeH MiD RD RE and RIM. He spent 12 years in the MN before joining the Nigerian Marine. He fought in the Boer War. In December 1915 he was awarded the DSO “for his

*services during operations in the Cameroons. At the beginning of the campaign Commander Hughes superintended the work of clearing a way through the wreck barrage and piloting HMS Challenger to within bombardment range of Douala, and he has subsequently, at considerable risk and frequently under fire, carried out survey work on the Sanaga, Njong and Campo rivers, and continuously harassed the enemy's coast outposts."* Over time was variously listed as Cdr RNR and Cdr RIM. The former is confirmed by his RD. After the Cameroons he was one of the first three officers appointed to the IWT and responsible for its initial planning and operation. Later he commanded all the IWT vessels and men supporting the advance on Baghdad. He was then appointed Director IWT and remained in post until at least the end of August 1919. He returned to the Nigerian Marine, became its Director/Commodore aged 63 and was a highly regarded officer. He was connected with the establishment of Port Harcourt in Nigeria. He was awarded the CMG on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1917. He retired in 1930 and crossed the bar at Knightsbridge, London on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1936.

12. **Knowles**, Eustace Oliver (08-09) OBE, MiD, Lt RIM and Captain RE. On 27<sup>th</sup> August 1918 while a temporary Captain RE he was MiD by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI. He crossed the bar in 1920 and is buried at Basra.
13. **Labey**, George Thomas MC, MBE (02-04). Branch Pilot, BPS and Capt RE (IWT). Born Jersey CI in 1889.
14. **Milne-Henderson**, Thomas Maxwell Stuart (05-07) Commodore RIM CIE, OBE, also Major RE. He was MiD by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1917 He was MiD for a second time by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1919. He was awarded the OBE in 1920. He became Surveyor In Charge, Marine Survey of India, Chief of Staff RIN and acting Officer Commanding the RIN in 1939. Retired 1941. He was a native of Edinburgh.
15. **Moilliet**, Hubert Mainwaring Keir (1892-94) Lt-Cdr RIM OBE on loan to the IWT. On 8<sup>th</sup> March 1918 he was MiD by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB Commander- in Chief, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force. He was MiD again on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918 by Lt-Gen Sir W R Marshall KCB KCSI.
16. **O'Brien**, Wulstan H (1898-1900). Leadsman BPS, and Major RE (IWT). Killed in action in France on 1917 February 2<sup>nd</sup> aged 33. He is buried in La Gorgue Communal Cemetery, Grave III.C.6. He was the son of Thomas and Elizabeth O'Brien, of Worcester; husband of Edith Muriel O'Brien, of Herne Bay. During his BPS service he was an accomplished cartographer. In Conway he had been cox of the winning gig crew in 1900.
17. **Park**, Cecil Trevor (1895-96). Master Pilot, BPS and Lt RE (IWT). He joined the BPS in 1901. Crossed the bar at his home at Melahide, Co Dublin.
18. **Poyntz**, Alban Rohere Castleton (02-03) Capt DSC, MiD. On 10<sup>th</sup> August 1917 he was awarded the DSC for operations in Mesopotamia. No specific citation was given. He held a master square rigged certificate. He crossed the bar at Teignmouth on 1st December 1968 and was buried at sea

## 6 LIST OF OCs IN OTHER WWI MESOPOTAMIAN FORCES

1. **Carre**, Ernst George (1886-88) MiD. He was MiD twice while serving as Master of a civilian transport. First by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1918 and then by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918.
2. **Coope**, Raymond Henry (1869-71) MiD. He was MiD twice while serving as Master of a civilian transport. First by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1918 and then by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918.
3. **De Verinne**, Dallas, Herbert (10-12). Died aged 19 while serving as Third Officer in HMT (Troopship) *Egra* (BISN Co.,) near Basra. The Cadet magazine of July 1918 reports that he succumbed to a severe attack of tetanus. He is believed to have been buried at sea.
4. **Hallett**, Cecil Gwydyr (02-04) DSC DSO. Lt RIM (March 1919). On 21<sup>st</sup> September 1917 he was awarded the DSC while serving in the 3<sup>rd</sup> class cruiser *Proserpine* in the river campaign to capture Baghdad: *"He has given me valuable help throughout the campaign and has carried out the gunnery duties for the squadron. His experience particularly under fire, is of great value, and he has frequently done this under fire."*
5. **Hughes-Hallett**, Henry Philip (05-07) Lt Cdr MBE DSC MiD RIM. On 10<sup>th</sup> August 1917 he was awarded the DSC for operations in Mesopotamia. No specific citation was given. On 24<sup>th</sup> he was MiD. In July 1920 he was awarded the MBE for *"valuable services rendered in connection with the Aden Field Force, RN"*. In 1924 he was in charge of the RIN's Midshipman Instruction School.
6. **Irving**, Richard Baufin (1892-93) Lt Cdr RD RNR was awarded the OBE on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1919 for *"valuable services in Naval Transport, as Officer-In-Charge Landing military stores on the Palestine coast"*.
7. **Merriman**, Reginald Dundas (04-05) Cdr DSC. He was awarded the DSC for *"valuable services in connection with the defence of Kut-Al-Amara"*. He was serving with the IWT and their role was to move personnel, material and armament. He married Miss L Haviland at Rangoon on 6<sup>th</sup> Oct 1924.
8. **Jones**, B H Lt. The *Conway* years of this individual are not known but there is only one B H Jones listed, Bryan Hugh **Jones** (52-54)
9. **Peirse**, Richard Edmund Charles (1873-75) Vice Admiral KCB KBE MVO DL RN. He was Commander in Chief of the East Indies Station from 1913, commanding RN vessels supporting the Mesopotamian Campaign. His flagship was the 3<sup>rd</sup> class cruiser *Proserpine* He invented the Gunnery Control System for the RN used in all capital ships with large guns.



Above Peirse

10. **Rattray**, Arthur Rullion (06-07) Rear Admiral CB, KBE CIE RIN. MiD. On 15<sup>th</sup> August 1917 he was mentioned on dispatches during his Royal Flying Corps (RFC) service in the Mesopotamian campaign. Rattray was born in Gatehouse of Fleet, Scotland, the fourth of five children born to Arthur Rattray, a retired Indian Civil Servant and judge, and his wife Mary Louise Wakely (née Sutherland). His parents had returned from Bengal, where their first three children were born, in around 1889. Rattray was sent to *Conway* in January 1906, remaining there until December 1907. He then trained at HMS *Ganges*, near Ipswich, before serving in the MN, working for the Aberdeen-based shipping company of George Milne & Co. He joined the RIM in 1912. He continued to serve in the RIM after the outbreak of World War I, but on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1917 he was appointed a temporary lieutenant on the General List to serve in the Army's RFC as a flying officer (observer), with seniority from 7<sup>th</sup> November 1916, but without prior pay or allowances. He served in the Mesopotamian Campaign, gaining a mention in despatches from the Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant-General Sir Stanley Maude, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1917. By mid-1918, by which time the RFC and the Royal Naval Air Service had merged to form the Royal Air Force, Rattray was serving in No 104 Squadron, based in France, flying as gunner/observer in an Airco DH.9 two-seater bomber. His first aerial victories came on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1918 over Saverne, when he and pilot Lieutenant Pickup destroyed a Pfalz D.III, and shared in the driving down out of control of another with 2nd Lieutenant George Smith and Sergeant William Harrop. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August he and Lieutenant Pope destroyed an Albatross D.V over Mannheim. His final two victories come in October, with Lieutenant J. H. Cuthbertson as pilot. They destroyed an enemy aircraft over Anney on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and a Fokker D.VII over Jametz on the 29<sup>th</sup>. He left the RAF after the war, re-joining the RIM, which became the RIN in 1934. On 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1934 he was promoted from Lieutenant Commander to Commander, and to Captain on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1940. By the time he was made a Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1943, he was serving as a Commodore, and by 14<sup>th</sup> June 1945, when he was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath, had been promoted to Rear Admiral. He was serving as Flag Officer, Bombay, during the 1946 mutiny which he helped put down. He was made a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1948, two weeks before his retirement on 13 January. He crossed the bar at his home in Camberley, Surrey, on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1966.
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11. **Scott**, Charles Arthur (1895-96) Lt. He was awarded the DSO "*for services rendered in connection with military operations in the field in Mesopotamia ... included in Army awards and lists*". His rank was stated as Lt RIM so it is assumed he was not serving in the RE/IWT. In March 1919 he was gazetted as a Commander.
12. **Shone**, Richard Edward (1880-82) MiD. He was MiD by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1917 while serving as Master of a civilian transport.
13. **Thyne**, William Kirkwood (1890-92) Capt RIM. He was MiD on 27<sup>th</sup> Aug 1916. Born Aden 1876, son of Capt W K Thyne ex Indian Marine. He crossed the bar in April 1932 Aldbourne, Wiltshire.
14. **Turbett**, Lionel William Richard Tufnell (00-01) Capt RIM OBE. Was MiD four times. First by Lt-Gen Sir Stanley Maude KCB on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1917 while serving in Sea Transports. Then by Lt-Gen Maude on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1918. On 27<sup>th</sup> August 1918 by Lt-Gen W R Marshall KCB KCSI, and finally by Marshall again on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1919.

## 7 LIST OF OCs IN THE WWII IWT/MIDDLE EAST

The following OCs' names have been discovered to date.

1. **Black** Foster Wilson (35-37) Sgt RAFVR served in 44 Sqn RAF across the Middle East. He was killed in action in 1941.
2. **Colquhoun**, James (23-25). Served on loan from the Bengal Pilot Service (BPS) to the RIE's WWII IWT service. His IWT rank is not known but he was a 14th Army river pilot in Burma, sailing "*up the Narf (Naf) River under the Japs' noses as they held the right bank of the river at the time*". He was the literally the first to land with General Stockwell at Taungup after two and a half years of Japanese occupation. He was the last Commodore of the BPS and handed over control to its successor, the Kolkata Port Trust when India gained its independence.
3. **Franklin**, Garrick, George (22-24). IWT rank not known, Leadsman BPS and mid RNR. He was serving in the IWT's WWII service at Tobruk and the Western Desert. He is shown right in 1924 as a finalist for the Queen's Gold Medal.
4. **Gahan**, Harold James (22-24) /Lt RIN. Commander of *Lilavati* and participated in Operation Dover, the capture of Abadan.
5. **Garstin**, Richard (00-02). Commodore RIN, Lt Col RE and Commodore RNR, OBE, CBE, CdeG. See his entry in Section 5, he is the only OC known to have served in Mesopotamia in both world wars.
6. **Hector**, Wynford John (34-36). Served in the Fao Bar Dredging Service (part of the IWT) at the mouth of the Shat el Arab opposite Abadan Island. He played in the rugby 3<sup>rd</sup> XV in 1935.
7. **Passmore-Edwards**, Henry Ellis (15-16) Lt Cdr RINR. On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1941 he was appointed to command the sloop *Lawrence* (U83) seen right. He remained in her until 11<sup>th</sup> January 1942. He was awarded MiD on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1942 *for courage, enterprise and devotion to duty in operations in the Persian Gulf*.



Above: Franklin

Below: Hector



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