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Intruder in the Harem, or Captain Martin Eric Nasmith's Oriental Adventures

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Martin Eric Nasmith's (1883–1965) name¹ was immortalised in the history of the British Navy, although to Polish historians and enthusiasts of maritime affairs he is perhaps better known due to his contributions to the Polish Navy, for which he was awarded the Order of Polonia Restituta I class² on 19 August 1941 (fig. 1). He also manifested his devotion to Polish sailors after WW2, serving as chairman of the Honorary Committee of the Naval Armed Forces Self-Help Association (in 1961 renamed the Association of Naval Armed Forces) in London from 1947 until his death.³ This article, however, is devoted to the initial period of this outstanding officer's career and is an attempt to summarise his achievements during three underwater patrols in the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmara in 1915. The first of those missions won him the Victoria Cross, and all three together the appellation of the most effective British submariner of WW1.

- 1 He changed his surname to Dunbar-Nasmith in 1920, having married Beatrix Justina Dunbar-Rivers.
- 2 In his justification for the application for awarding Adm. Dunbar Nasmith this decoration, Rear Adm. Jerzy Świrski emphasised his outstanding merits in the field of operational cooperation between the British and Polish Navies in the early months of WW2, including the organisation of the Polish naval base in Plymouth and the evacuation of Polish soldiers from France in June 1940, Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum (hereafter PISM), cat. no. MAR. (A.V.12/680); *Royal Navy (RN) Officers 1939–1945*, unithistories.com, accessed 20 July 2022, https://www.unithistories.com/officers/RN_officersD6.html.
- 3 Tadeusz Kondracki, *Stowarzyszenie Marynarki Wojennej 1945–1992* (Gdynia: Muzeum Marynarki Wojennej w Gdyni, 2003), 51, 96.



Figure 1. Captain Martin Eric Nasmith, VC, in 1918, in a portrait by Ambrose McEvoy

Source: Imperial War Museum, © IWM Art.IWM ART 1335, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/18579>, accessed 30 October 2022.

Anglophone historiography has paid quite a lot of attention to Nasmith, because every author who has written about the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915 felt obliged to refer more or less exhaustively to his merits. However, all these texts constitute a one-sided narrative, based solely on British sources.⁴ The author of this article is offering the first attempt in Western historiography to compare the British and Turkish points of

⁴ Most of them repeat information contained in a book by Pether Shankland and Anthony Hunter, titled *Dardanelles Patrol* (London: Mayflower Books, 1971). These authors based their work on Nasmith's own memories (both those written by the admiral himself and those he provided directly in interviews he gave to the authors while he was still alive), official documents from the collections of the admiral and other submariners fighting in Turkish waters during WW1, as well as on the recollections of several then still living crew members of "E11."

view. The decision to take up this challenge came from an awareness that Nasmith's view of the situation at the moment when he was observing the effects of his attacks through the periscope, or at best from the navigation bridge on "E11"'s conning tower, could not be complete and entirely objective. He could not have known that some of the vessels he had sunk in shallow coastal waters were salvaged by the Turks and restored to service. Consequently, such a vessel, considered by the British until now to have been definitively eliminated, had in fact only been seriously damaged. Thus, Nasmith probably did not realise that during the second patrol, he sunk the very same ship twice. Presumably, he was also unaware that he attacked the same transport ship without success during each of the three missions in the Sea of Marmara. The author draws attention on some controversial issues, i.e. possible violations of international law by Nasmith, or collaboration of Christian minorities living in the area with crews of the British submarines too. Those topics are, however only signalled and certainly deserve more detailed analysis in separate articles. The aim of this one was only to present a possibly most extensive and detailed account of operational activities and military achievements of "E11" and her commander in the Dardanelles and on the Sea of Marmara in 1915.

It should be noted here that Turkish historiography has attempted such a comparison of sources, but the results are not widely known to Western historians, and in some cases they raise objections. The most valuable works are certainly two monographs written jointly by Ahmed Güleriyüz and Bernd Langensiepen. However, the first of these books, published in English,⁵ requires careful reading and frequent verification with sources and other Turkish-language studies, because it contains numerous, sometimes very confusing editorial errors and a few factual ones too. At first glance, the latter work⁶ appears to be the Turkish edition of the former one, but in reality it is an extensively rewritten text, in which most of the errors of the English edition have been corrected and numerous pieces of new information added – unfortunately at the expense of removing many other important threads. A fairly complete picture can only be obtained by using both works of the above-mentioned authors.

Other books that should be mentioned here are two monographs by the amateur historian Serkan Ertem. The first is dedicated to submarine warfare during operations in the Dardanelles.⁷ This work, although pioneering and long-awaited in Turkey, unfortunately presents a very low level of scholarship, thus many interesting and unique pieces of information provided only by this author should be approached with great

5 Bernd Langensiepen and Ahmet Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman Steam Navy 1828–1923* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1995).

6 Ahmet Güleriyüz and Bernd Langensiepen, *Osmanlı Donanması 1828–1923* (İstanbul: Denizler Kitabevi / Kaptan Yayıncılık, 2007).

7 Serkan Ertem, *Canakkale Denizaltı Harekâtı* (İstanbul: Denizler Kitabevi, 2011).

caution, all the more so because in some cases he shows a very clear tendency to falsify facts relating to a specific thesis (for example, that Nasmith knowingly violated international conventions by attacking ships carrying wounded soldiers). In his second book, devoted almost exclusively to Nasmith,⁸ Ertem avoids unfounded accusations against the commander of “E11,” but in terms of the level of scholarship, this work is not much different from the previous one. Some new and undoubtedly interesting information can be found in it, but unfortunately this has not been supported by any reliable sources (maybe hence the bizarre subtitle: *Çanakkale Denizaltı Savaşının Gizli Tarihi* [A secret history of the submarine war in the Dardanelles]). The author’s extremely selective and inconsistent approach to the issue of bibliographic footnotes is one of the most glaring shortcomings of the aforementioned monograph.

However, let us move on to the subject of this article. When he took over the command of “E11” as a sub-lieutenant on 3 August 1914, Martin Eric Nasmith already had eight years of service on A, C and D type submarines,⁹ which placed him among the more experienced submariners of his day. In spite of this, he could not count the first months of the Great War as a success. In October, due to a technical failure of his submarine, he had to abandon the mission of penetrating the Baltic Sea along with the “E1” and “E9” submarines. Two months later, a torpedo he fired passed under the keel of the German battleship SMS “Posen,” which had previously shelled Hartlepool.¹⁰ In a fit of despair, Nasmith, who was already in the rank of commander, swore that he would touch neither alcohol nor cigarettes until he had sunk a battleship.¹¹

8 Serkan Ertem, *Gelibolu Korsanı. Çanakkale Denizaltı Savaşının Gizli Tarihi* (İstanbul: AZ Kitap, 2014).

9 Type A: Displacement: 190 t surfaced, 205–207 t submerged; built in the Vickers shipyard between 1902 and 1905; machinery: one 16-cylinder 350 hp Wolseley petrol engine plus one 125 hp electric motor (“A1” and “A12”), 450 hp / 150 hp (“A2” and “A4”), 550 hp / 150 hp (“A5” and “A7”), 600 hp / 150 hp (“A8” and “A12” [after modification]), one 6-cylinder 500 hp heavy oil engine plus one 150 hp electric motor (“A13”); speed on surface 9.5 kts (“A1” and “A12”), 10 kts (“A2” and “A4”), 11.5 kts (“A5” and “A7”), 11 kts (“A8” and “A12” [after modification], “A13”), in submersion 6 kts (“A1,” “A8” and “A12” [before and after modification], “A13”), 7 kts (“A2,” “A4,” “A5” and “A7”); range: 320 nm (when surfaced at a speed of 10 kts); armament: one 457 mm torpedo tube (“A1”–“A4”), two 457 mm torpedo tubes (“A5”–“A13”); crew of 11 men. Type B: Displacement: 287 t surfaced, 316 t submerged; built in the Vickers shipyard between 1904 and 1906; machinery: one 16-cylinder 600 hp Vickers petrol engine plus one 290 hp electric motor; speed on surface 12 kts, in submersion 6 kts; range: 1000 nm (when surfaced at a speed of 8.75 kts); armament: two 457 mm torpedo tubes; crew of 15 men. Type C: Displacement: 287–290 t surfaced, 316–320 t submerged; built between 1906 and 1910 in the Vickers shipyard (with the exception of “C17”–“C20,” “C33” and “C34” which were built by Chatham DYd; machinery: one 16-cylinder 600 hp Vickers petrol engine plus one 300 hp electric motor; speed on surface 13 kts, in submersion 7.5 kts; range: 1000 nm (when surfaced at a speed of 8.75 kts); armament: two 457 mm torpedo tubes; crew of 16 men. Randal Gray, ed., *Conway’s All the World’s Fighting Ships 1906–1921* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 2006), 86–87.

10 Michael Wilson, *Destination Dardanelles* (London: Leo Cooper, 1988), 81–82.

11 Stephen Snelling, *VCs of the First World War. The Naval VCs* (Thrupp-Stroud-Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing – Phoenix Mill, 2002), 61.

It was only his achievements in a completely different theatre of war that ended his spell of bad luck and freed him from his self-enforced abstinence. On 19 May 1915, “E11”¹² entered the Dardanelles for the first time under Nasmith’s command. The aim was to penetrate the Sea of Marmara (which had been an internal basin of the Ottoman Empire since 1453) and cause the greatest possible harm to Turkish transport and war vessels supporting the army fighting at that time against the landings of the Entente troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula (fig. 2).¹³

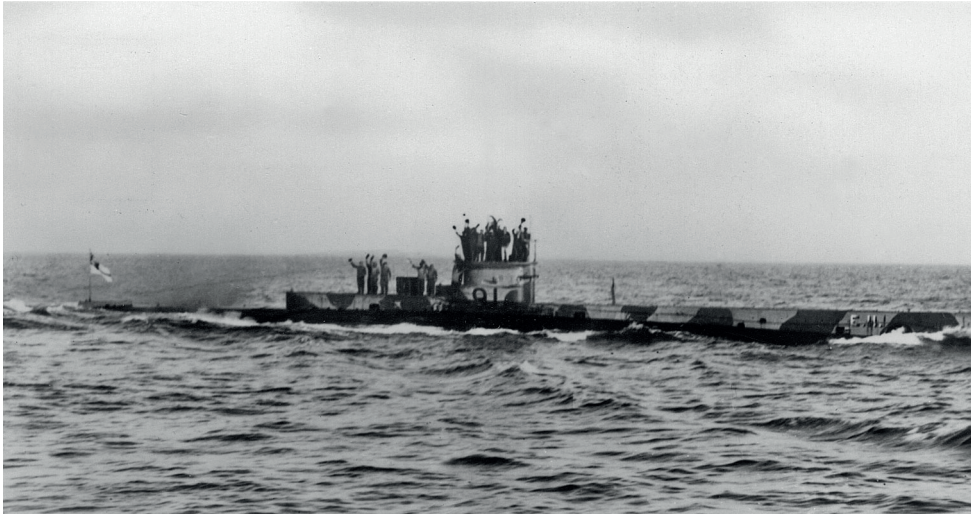


Figure 2. “E11” returning from one of her patrols on the Sea of Marmara in 1915

Source: Piotr Nykiel’s collection.

After easily overcoming a naval minefield and the narrowest section of the strait between Çanakkale and Kilitbahir, Nasmith spotted the battleships “Turgud Reis” and “Barbaros Hayreddin”¹⁴ through his periscope. The Ottoman vessels were manoeuvring in Poyraz Bay (opposite Cape Nara), from where they were conducting indirect shelling over the Gallipoli Peninsula at the Australian and New Zealand troops (ANZAC),

12 Displacement: 667 t surfaced, 807 t submerged; launched in 1914 in the Vickers shipyard; machinery: 2 eight-cylinder 1600 hp Vickers diesel engines plus two 840 hp electric motors; speed on surface 15 kts, in submersion 9 kts; range: 3000 nm (when surfaced at a speed of 10 kts); armament: 5 x 457 mm torpedo tubes, 1 x 76 mm gun (since the second patrol on the Sea of Marmara); crew of 30 men. Gray, ed., *Conway’s*, 87–88.

13 Çanakkale Boğaz Komutanlığı, ed., *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915* (İstanbul: Deniz Basımevi, 2008), 12.

14 Here (as in the case of the names of other Ottoman vessels), transliteration from the Ottoman-Turkish language was used. This ship also appears in literature in modern spelling as “Barbaros Hayrettin,” and sometimes even in abbreviated form as “Barbaros.”

as well as the ships supporting their fight in the Kabatepe area. The commander of "E11" ordered the crew to prepare for a torpedo attack, but the battleships, apparently warned of the presence of an enemy submarine by destroyers that were protecting them, headed for the northern end of the Dardanelles. Nasmith did not take up the pursuit, being aware that he had to save the vessel's batteries, especially since dawn was already breaking and he had not yet reached the middle of the length of the strait.¹⁵

Leaving the Dardanelles, "E11" headed towards Tekirdağ (in western literature Rostodo) on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Marmara. After making sure that the port there was empty, Nasmith decided to continue towards Istanbul. At 11:30 a.m. on 21 May, he stopped and searched a small coaster, from which he requisitioned four chickens and eighty eggs (the captain of the ship refused to accept payment from the British). The submarine commander decided to tie the prize to his starboard and use it as a kind of screen, preventing "E11" from being seen from the land. Under such cover, he continued in the previously chosen direction until 8:00 p.m., when he detached the coaster and allowed her to sail away.¹⁶

At 5:30 a.m. on 23 May, the British submarine opened the list of her victories by sinking the Ottoman torpedo gunboat "Peleng-i Derya"¹⁷ at Bakırköy, near Istanbul.¹⁸ The vessel had been on surveillance duty near the local ammunition factory (n.b., its director was a German, Capt. Hermann Hugo Waldemar Pieper, who had been "exiled" to Istanbul for sailing the armoured cruiser SMS "Yorck" into a German naval mine-field in the Baltic Sea in November 1914¹⁹). "E11" paid for this success with quite bizarre damage, as the periscope was hit by a shell (most likely of 75 mm calibre) fired from the

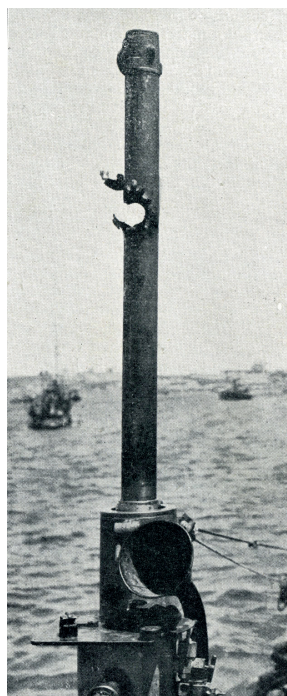
15 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 53–55.

16 Victor Rudenko, *Gelibolu. Denizden Saldırı*, transl. Dilek Cenkçiler (Ankara: ODTÜ Yayıncılık, 2009), 173; Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 65–67.

17 Displacement: 900 t (full); launched in 1890 at Kiel; machinery: 2 "Germania" AG 4700 hp steam turbines; speed: 14 kts; armament: 3 x 75 mm quick-firing guns, 4 x 47 mm quick-firing guns, 3 x 355 mm torpedo tubes; crew: 12 officers, 15 NCO's, 83 sailors, see: Langensiepen and Güler, *The Ottoman*, 157–158. At the time of the ship's sinking, the crew consisted of 19 officers and 82 sailors. According to the report of Maj. Seyfi, Head of the Ottoman Intelligence Department of the General Staff dated 23 May 1915, six crew members, including one officer, were killed as a result of this attack, and six sailors were wounded. Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, Directorate of State Archives, Ottoman Archives (hereafter: COA), cat. no. DH. EUM. VRK./14-102-1. According to Saim Besbelli only one seaman was killed and five crew members (including one officer) were injured. See: Saim Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi*. Vol. 8: *Deniz Harekâtı* (Ankara: Gnkur. Basımevi, 1976), 279. Ertem, on the other hand, writes about two fatalities. See: Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 94.

18 Today it is a district of this city.

19 Erol Mütercimler, *Korkak Abdul'den Coni Türk'e. Gelibolu 1915* (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2005), 151152. Pieper's tragic navigational error in the approach to Wilhelmshaven cost the lives of his 336 subordinates.



gun of the sinking ship (fig. 3).²⁰ Although Nasmith's first prey was not a battleship, his subordinates decided it was time to release him from virtuous abstinence. During the time used to repair the periscope, the commander of "E11" received some beer and a box of cigars from his officers.²¹

Figure 3. "E11"'s periscope after being hit by a shell from the sinking "Peleng-i Derya" torpedo gunboat

Source: "L'Illustration," Samedi 24 Juillet 1915, 73e Année, No 3777, 95, Piotr Nykiel's collection.

The next day, the submarine stopped the Turkish steamer "Nağra" (474 GRT), which was carrying ammunition and weapons.²² Having allowed the crew and the passengers to leave the ship, the British blew her up.²³ Before leaving the scene, Nasmith spotted another ship on the horizon and pursued her as far as Tekirdağ. There he torpedoed

20 It was the second and the last shell that the gunboat managed to fire before she sank, which happened only 5 minutes after being hit by a torpedo. See: Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 70–71.

21 Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 174.

22 The cargo consisted of, among others, a 150 mm L/45 gun dismantled from the battlecruiser "Yavuz Sultan Selim" (formerly known as SMS "Goeben") (including 250 pcs. of ammunition) and 350 pieces of 88 mm artillery cartridges. Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 279.

23 One of the passengers of this vessel was the *Chicago Daily News* correspondent Raymond Gram Swing. Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 117–118. Snelling does not give the name of the journalist who, in his opinion, worked for *Chicago Sun*. See: Snelling, *VCs of the First World War*, 58. Adm. Wester-Wemyss and Vice-Adm. Osborne also claim that the commander of "E11" spoke to the *Chicago Sun* reporter Silas Q. Swing. See: Rosslyn Erskine Wemyss, *The Navy in the Dardanelles Campaign* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1924), 154; Cecil Vivian Osborne, *Smoke on the Horizon: Mediterranean Fighting 1914–1918* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1933), 172. Shankland and Hunter confirm that he was Raymond Gram Swing, but from the *Chicago Herald*. See: *Dardanelles Patrol*, 80. The same authors claim that the name Silas and the initial Q were given to the American in an official report by officers of "E11," who only managed to remember his surname. Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 87.

her.²⁴ The unlucky vessel was the passenger ferry “Hünkâr İskeleyi” (521 GRT),²⁵ which had a significant amount of rifle ammunition onboard.²⁶ This attack ended with damage to “E11”’s only other periscope. A rifle bullet got lodged in its base. Fortunately for Nasmith, it did not pierce the instrument and it was enough to remove it to regain the ability to rotate and pull in the periscope.²⁷ While coming out of Tekirdağ Bay, in the vicinity of Marmaraereğlisi, his submarine stopped the side-wheeled paddle steamer



tug “Kismet” (GRT Unknown), which was carrying horses and a significant amount of barbed wire. Two attempts to board the vessel in order to blow her up failed. Each time, the tug pulled away at the last moment and tried to ram “E11.” The captain of the vessel masterfully used the advantage in manoeuvrability that the side-wheel drive gave him. However, his constant retreat towards land finally deprived him of an escape route. Fearing being hit by a torpedo, he decided to beach the “Kismet.” Although the crew hastily left the deck of the tugboat, another British attempt at boarding ended in failure too – this time due to the intervention of an approximately fifty-man-strong Ottoman cavalry unit, which showered “E11”’s conning tower with rifle bullets from a nearby hill. While retreating, the British submarine fired a torpedo from her stern tube, but it exploded on the shore without even slightly damaging “Kismet” (fig. 4).²⁸

Figure 4. Remains of torpedo fired by “E11” at the paddle steamer tug “Kismet”

Source: Istanbul Naval Museum, inventory no. 0428, photo © Piotr Nykiel.

24 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 81–82.

25 Before the war, this vessel belonged to the civilian shipowner Şirket-i Hayriyye, from which it was taken over by the Ottoman Navy. See: Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 118.

26 Langensiepen and Güteryüz, *The Ottoman*, 36. Apparently, the ship must have arrived at the port some time before she was caught up by “E11” and, thanks to this, casualties among the crew were limited to two dead, see: *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 14. Ertem claims that the surfaced “E11,” flying a Turkish flag on her conning tower (!), tried to stop “Hünkâr İskeleyi” near Tekirdağ, but her captain, Tahsin Bey, made an attempt to escape and finally, just before receiving a torpedo hit, grounded the ship on the rocks at the entrance to the port and, thanks to this, it was possible to save most of the crew and part of the cargo. Unfortunately, the author does not give the source of this information. Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 100–101.

27 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 83.

28 Usborne, *Smoke on the Horizon*, 173–174; Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 83–86. The next day the tug was pulled into deep water and reached Tekirdağ on her own. See: Langensiepen and Güteryüz, *The Ottoman*, 36; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 119.

Undeterred by this failure, Nasmith continued his voyage towards Istanbul, where at 12:40 p.m. on 25 May he attacked the steamer "İstanbul" (3359 GRT), moored at the quay at Tophane, although the assault had negligible results. Because of a Gyro failure, the first of the torpedoes launched went around in a circle, almost hit "E11" and exploded on the waterfront,²⁹ while the second one, according to some sources,³⁰ sank a barge moored to the side of the above-mentioned steamer. There are, however, historians, like Saim Besbelli, who believe that "İstanbul" was directly hit by a torpedo, which resulted in a hole in her side measuring 6.3 x 3.5 m.³¹ After all, contrary to the intelligence information that Nasmith received a few days later by radio, the ship did not sink.³² It should be stressed that this, not entirely successful, attack had an effect which the commander of "E11" certainly did not expect: the Turks had to pause the transport of the 1st Infantry Division, which has just started to embark "İstanbul" and on several other vessels, in order to reach the Dardanelles by sea. Bearing in mind the poorly-developed rail and road infrastructure, and thus the lack of an alternative way to provide a fast delivery of supplements to this front, we must admit that Nasmith (at least temporarily) significantly supported the war effort of the Entente troops fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

After the attack on "İstanbul" returning happily, though not without hassle, to the much safer waters of the Sea of Marmara,³³ "E11" had then the next day a confrontation with an Ottoman seaplane, which dropped three bombs.³⁴

On the night of 27/28 May, Nasmith encountered the Ottoman battleship "Barbaros Hayreddin."³⁵ However, the attempt to torpedo her while on the surface ended in failure, as thanks to the glowing moon and cloudless sky, the submarine was spotted by one of the two escort vessels (it is not known whether it was the torpedo boat "Draç" or the destroyer "Yarhisar"), which tried to ram her. "E11" managed to submerge at the

29 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 93; Usborne, *Smoke on the Horizon*, 174–175.

30 Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 119 and *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 15.

31 He has based his statements on documents from the Archive of Military History and Strategic Studies (ATASE) in Ankara. Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 280. The damage to the bow of this vessel was also confirmed in the report of the head of the Intelligence Department, Ottoman General Staff Maj. Seyfi dated 2 June 1915. COA, cat. no. DH. EUM. VRK./25-24-2.

32 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 114.

33 After the described attack, the crew fought a long and dramatic struggle to regain control of "E11," tossed in different directions and to various depths by bottom and surface currents. Due to the intense fire from the coastal artillery, it was also not possible to surface to the periscope depth in order to determine the position of the submarine to the shore. Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 94–97.

34 Ibid., 106.

35 Ertem is the only author who claims that she was "Turgud Reis," the second of the Brandenburg-class battleships purchased by the Ottoman Empire. See: *Gelibolu*, 118.

last moment, avoiding a collision. This happened only a minute before the planned launch of torpedoes towards the battleship.³⁶

The next day, in the vicinity of İzmit Bay, the British submarine encountered a convoy consisting of three passenger ships and the cargo ship “Bandırma” (474 GRT), protected by the torpedo boat “Akhisar.”³⁷ These vessels were carrying soldiers and artillery ammunition to the Gallipoli Peninsula. “E11” fired a torpedo which blew up 7,000 pieces of ammunition for field guns carried in the holds of “Bandırma,” sinking her within less than a minute, along with almost all of the crew and about 250 infantry soldiers. As it turned out, it was the most severe loss ever suffered at sea by the Ottoman land troops.³⁸ At 1:45 p.m., east of İmralı Island, “E11” launched a failed attack on the unarmed steamer “Doğan” (GRT Unknown), carrying about 7,000 civilians (including women and children) on the route from Istanbul to Bandırma.³⁹ The torpedo hit the target, but did not explode. So the ship reached her destination port, and “E11” salvaged a drifting torpedo.⁴⁰ After it was dismantled and carefully checked, all the crew members present during the examination agreed that it was in full working order. Thus, its failure to explode could be considered a miracle.⁴¹

On 30 May near Cape Kapıdağ, “E11” fought a fruitless artillery duel with the Ottoman motor gunboat “No. 20.”⁴² Then she headed for the Bandırma port, where she severely damaged the freighter “Madeleine Rickmers” (3431 GRT), which was about to set off for Istanbul with a cargo of barley, soap, and olive oil.⁴³ As the ship formally be-

36 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 109–110; Osborne, *Smoke on the Horizon*, 176–177.

37 Ertem, *Canakkale*, 120. According to Shankland and Hunter it was a convoy of five merchant ships, protected by a single destroyer. *Dardanelles Patrol*, 115.

38 Ertem, *Canakkale*, 120 and 130; Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 280; Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 37.

39 COA, cat. no. HR.SYS./2099-9; Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 181–182.

40 Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 37. It was only after firing the torpedo and finding that it did not explode that Nasmith took a closer look at his would-be victim and found that he had attacked a passenger ferry. Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 117–118. The attack without warning on an unarmed commercial steamer carrying 700 civilian passengers, including women and children, was also reported in a protest note of 10 August 1915 issued by the Ottoman Minister of War Enver Pasha, cf.: Hümmet Kanal, “Osmanlı Belgelerine Göre Çanakkale Muharebelerinin Harp-Harekât Hukuku Açısından İncelenmesi,” in: *100’üncü Yılında Çanakkale Zaferi Sempozyumu, Ulusal Sempozyum*, 2–29 Nisan 2015, İstanbul, ed. Zekeriya Türkmen (İstanbul: Harp Akademileri Basımevi, n.d.), 510.

41 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 120.

42 Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 280. Full displacement 12 t; launched in 1911 in Southampton-Woolston; machinery: 2 6-cylinder 70 hp JT Thomycroft engines; speed: 11,9 kts (during sea trials); armament: 1 or 2 37 mm quick-firing guns; crew: 2 officers and 4 seamen. Güleriyüz and Langensiepen, *Osmanlı Donanması*, 186.

43 While using the periscope to observe the last phase of the ship’s loading, Nasmith was, however, convinced that the numerous small boats were carrying soldiers who, according to his assumptions, must have come to Bandırma by rail, and were to be shipped further to the Gallipoli Peninsula.

longed to a German civilian shipowner ("Rickmers Reismühlen Rhederei & Schiffbau Actien Gesellschaft," based in Bremen), the Ottoman government issued an official, though essentially unfounded, protest over the alleged violation of international law.⁴⁴

On 1 June, near San Stefano (now Istanbul's Yeşilköy district), "E11" attacked another ship that belonged to the same shipowner – "Lilly Rickmers" (4081 GRT) – which, in addition to the German flag, reportedly had clearly visible Red Cross markings,⁴⁵ because she was allegedly carrying several hundred wounded. The torpedo launched by Nasmith missed, but the attack itself prompted another protest – this time perhaps rightly – by the government of the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁶ It is significant that British historiography only mentions "E11"'s attack on "Madeleine Rickmers."⁴⁷ There is also no conclusive evidence that "Lilly Rickmers" was ever used as a hospital ship. She does not appear in this capacity in any German or Turkish list of vessels for the period 1914–1918. We only know that this ship had remained in Ottoman waters since 18 August 1914.⁴⁸ On that very day, she arrived at the port of Çanakkale, where she was immediately transferred into the floating HQ of General Clemens Weber, the German delegate of the Ottoman General Staff in that city. Under pressure from the diplomats of the Entente countries still residing there, she had to hoist the Turkish flag on her mast.⁴⁹ In February 1916, "Lilly Rickmers" was included in the register of Ottoman coal ships.⁵⁰ In 1917 she was sold to the shipowner "See- und Kanalschiffahrt Wilhelm Hemsoth A.G." from Dortmund and renamed "Hans-Wilhelm Hemsoth."⁵¹ However, it cannot be ruled out that on 1 June 1915, the ship was used to transport the wounded on a one-off basis, and the Germans, more cautious than the Turks, decided to mark the ship

Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 132. "Madeleine Rickmers" was hit by a torpedo on the port side, at the level of the engine room, but thanks to the assistance of the tugboat sailing at her side, she was able to reach the shore and beach. After the provisional removal of damage, the ship went to Istanbul for more complex repairs. *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 16.

44 COA, cat. no. HR.SYS./2099-9; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 120; Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 37.

45 COA, cat. no. HR.SYS./2099-9; Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 280; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 120. In the monograph *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915* (16) there are only references to the signs of the Red Crescent on a white background, applied with paint on the ship's sides, and about Red Crescent jacks on masts.

46 COA, cat. no. HR.SYS./2099-9; Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 280; *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 16.

47 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 132–133. Osborne admittedly describes the attack on "Madeleine Rickmers" quite accurately, but gives the wrong date (31 May), nor does he mention the vessel's name or her nationality. Osborne, *Smoke on the Horizon*, 178.

48 Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 30.

49 Piotr Nykiel, *Wyprawa do Złotego Rogu. Działania wojenne w Dardanelach i na Morzu Egejskim (sierpień 1914 – marzec 1915)* (Kraków-Międzyzdroje: Arkadiusz Wingert, 2008), 106.

50 Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 50.

51 *The Ships List*, theshipslist.com, accessed 20.07.2022, <https://www.theshipslist.com/ships/lines/rickmers.shtml>.

with the Red Cross emblems. Nasmith's disregard for them may have been due to the fact that as a freighter with probably only a few passenger cabins, "Lilly Rickmers" was not suitable for permanent use as a hospital ship. "E11"'s commander presumably decided that medical markings were only a "cover" for unescorted military transport. The fact that soldiers were hidden on civilian merchant vessels and passenger ferries was indirectly admitted by the Turks themselves, who claimed that due to the high activity of the enemy submarines, it was recommended that officers and soldiers should take their seats in cabins under the main deck on ferries plying between the two shores of the Bosphorus and in the archipelago of the Princes' Islands.⁵²

At 9:40 a.m. on 2 June, "E11" launched a successful attack near Tekirdağ on the cargo ship "Tecilli" (390 GRT), despite the cover provided by the destroyer "Samsun." After receiving a torpedo blow to the starboard below the captain's bridge, the vessel sank within three minutes, along with the entire eighteen-person crew. The force of the explosion and the short time within which the ship plunged into the depths of the Sea of Marmara indicated that she was carrying ammunition.⁵³ At 10:15 a.m., "E11" encountered another steamer, which turned out to be "Başlangıç" (381 GRT). She kept as close to the shore as possible. After 35 minutes of tracking her, Nasmith fired a torpedo, but missed. The captain of the freighter realised that he was being attacked and headed towards the mouth of the Ana River, south of Panidos (today Banados). There he dropped anchor and carried out a quick evacuation of the crew.⁵⁴ The commander of "E11" intended to send a boarding group onto "Başlangıç" with explosives, in order to blow her up. This plan, however, was thwarted due to intense rifle fire from the shore. This also made it impossible to find and salvage the torpedo.⁵⁵ At 12:20 p.m. on the same day, "E11" came across a small, two-funnel transport ship escorted by two destroyers. Despite the very calm sea, Nasmith imperceptibly managed to take a position between one of the escort ships and the cargo vessel. However, the torpedo launched by him missed again. The reason for this – as the commander of "E11" assumed – was the slight submersion of his would-be victim. An inspection of the torpedo, which was

52 Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 280.

53 Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 138; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 120–121; *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 16. It is worth mentioning that after this action, Nasmith reported via radio that he had sunk a 'large ammunition ship' (Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 147), which taking into account the tonnage of "Tecilli" (only 390 GRT) was a blatant embellishment of the facts.

54 Turkish historiography claims that the panicked captain of the freighter that was missed by "E11"'s torpedo decided to run his ship aground. See: Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 120–121; Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 127; *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 16. This was also the first interpretation of the manoeuvres undertaken by "Başlangıç," which Nasmith made. Eventually, however, the commander of "E11" noticed that the ship had dropped anchor. Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 139.

55 *Ibid.*, 139–140.

recovered some time later, showed that it had had no contact with the target, which would indicate that it must have passed under the attacked ship.⁵⁶

The next day, "E11" pursued the steam yacht, which Nasmith intended to stop and blow up. The large distance between the two vessels in the initial phase of the action and the low smoke from the funnel of the Turkish yacht meant that none of those present on the top of the submarine's conning tower (including Nasmith himself) realised that the enemy at some point made a U-turn and was heading at full speed towards them. This observation was only made when the distance between the two vessels had decreased to about a mile. In order to avoid ramming, "E11" was forced to perform a crash dive in the record time of 16 seconds. Although collision was averted, it was not possible to prevent the diesel engines from flooding.⁵⁷

Nasmith's last target before returning to base at Imroz was the freighter "Ceyhan" (3509 GRT), which had been converted into a surveillance ship. She was torpedoed on 7 June near the Musa Shoal (off the eastern bank of the Dardanelles, at the same latitude as the Akbaş Bay).⁵⁸ At the last moment, the ship avoided sinking by beaching.⁵⁹

The way back through the strait was calm until the submarine passed its narrowest section between Çanakkale and Kilitbahir, despite a serious failure of the electric engine, which reduced the maximum speed of the submerged vessel to 6 knots. However, after passing Çanakkale, the mooring wire of a mine got hooked on "E11"'s bow hydroplane, and remained stuck between the hydroplane and the hull. Aware of the danger, the commander of the submarine did not share his knowledge with the crew, but continued the cruise with sangfroid, pulling the mine (along with its anchor), which was floating only 20 feet from the hull.⁶⁰ He only freed himself from the deadly ballast in the open sea, after coming out of the firing range of the Turkish guns guarding the entrance to the Dardanelles (fig. 5).⁶¹

⁵⁶ Ibid., 140–141.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 144–146; Osborne, *Smoke on the Horizon*, 179.

⁵⁸ Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 151–152. As Besbelli (*Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 280) and the authors of *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915* (16) say, the "Ceyhan"'s main task was to cover with her own hull (in case of a torpedo attack) the battleships "Barbaros Hayreddin" and "Turgud Reis," which conducted indirect fire from the Dardanelles at the ANZAC troops fighting on the western shore of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

⁵⁹ Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 121. Langensiepen and Güleriyüz (*The Ottoman*, 37) and the authors of *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915* (16) claim, however, that the ship sank in shallow water.

⁶⁰ Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 153–157. Osborne writes about 1–2 feet, that is only 30.48–60.96 cm, which seems unlikely. *Smoke on the Horizon*, 181.

⁶¹ Ibid., 181–182; Snelling, *VCs of the First World War*, 60.

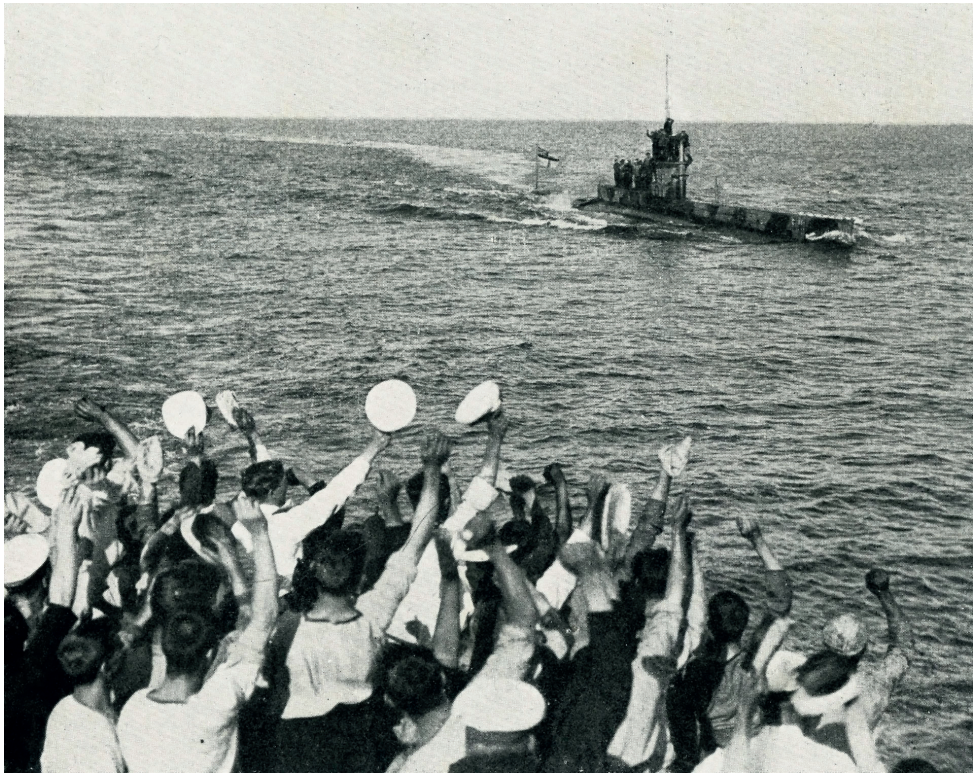


Figure 5. “E11” returning from her first patrol on the Sea of Marmara

Source: “L’Illustration,” Samedi 24 Juillet 1915, 73e Année, No 3777, 95, Piotr Nykiel’s collection.

For this spectacular patrol, Commander Nasmith was awarded the Victoria Cross and promoted to the rank of Captain.⁶² It should be emphasised, however, that there are grounds to assume that the official reports written by him were silent about the attack on the ship with the Red Cross markings. Nor can one be indifferent to the (fortunately also unsuccessful) attempt to sink the ferry “Doğan” (Nasmith only clarified that she was a vessel carrying civilians after the torpedo he had fired did not explode).⁶³ It should also be added that two of the ships damaged by his submarine were recorded by the British as sunken, and the “Tecilli” with a load capacity of only 390 GRT was reported as a “large ship with ammunition.” The total tonnage of the steam-powered transport vessels definitively eliminated by “E11” was therefore very modest and amounts to only 1,859 GRT. Even if we add to this the sailing ships of

⁶² Ibid., 59–61.

⁶³ Shankland and Hunter, *Dardanelles Patrol*, 117–118.

known tonnage, this fact cannot significantly affect the final assessment. It should be remembered, however, that “E11” was the first Allied submarine that managed to sink an enemy vessel after entering the Sea of Marmara. For the Ottoman Empire, which had a very rickety transport fleet, the loss of any, even the smallest ship – especially if it was carrying equally scarce war materials – was undoubtedly a blow.

The experience of the first patrol exposed a significant deficiency of “E11,” namely the lack of a gun to attack smaller ships seeking refuge in shallow coastal waters, as well as some land targets such as rail or road infrastructure. Nasmith’s great personal achievement, later exploited during subsequent patrols both by him and commanders of other Allied submarines, was the discovery of how to “set” stably a submerged submarine on the border of surface and bottom currents flowing in opposite directions (in the Sea of Marmara it runs at a depth of 50–70 feet). As a result, it was theoretically possible to stay in the same place for an extremely long time with the electric engines turned off. This gave the crew the opportunity to spend the night peacefully, or to wait out the threat from enemy vessels that were trying to hunt down the submarine.⁶⁴

Table 1. Ottoman and German vessels (except sailing ships) sunk or damaged by “E11” during her first patrol (May 19 – June 7, 1915)

NAME OF THE VESSEL	CLASS	DISPLACEMENT (t)	TONNAGE (GRT)	FATE OF THE VESSEL ACCORDING TO BRITISH SOURCES		FATE OF THE VESSEL ACCORDING TO TURKISH SOURCES	
				SUNK	DAMAGED	SUNK	DAMAGED
“Peleng-i Derya”	torpedo gunboat	900	—	x		x	
“Nağra”	transport ship	—	474	x		x	
“Hünkâr İskeleyi”	ferry	—	521	x		x	
“Kismet”	tug	—	N/D		x		x
“İstanbul”	transport ship	—	3,359	x			x
“Bandırma”	transport ship	—	474	x		x	
“Madeleine Rickmers” (G)	transport ship	—	3,431		x		x
“Tecilli”	transport ship	—	390	x		x	
“Ceyhan”	transport ship	—	3,509	x			x
IN TOTAL			at least 12,158	7	2	5	4

Note: In the table, the vessels damaged according to Turkish sources also include those salvaged and restored to service. (G) – a vessel under the German flag. Source: compiled by the author.

64 Ibid., 142–143.

At 1:30 a.m. on 5 August, "E11," set off from Kephalo Bay on Imroz Island (today Aydıncık Bay on Gökçeada Island) for her second patrol in the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmara, rearmed with a 76 mm gun. She covered the most difficult section of the strait without much problem, although she got entangled in a new anti-submarine net while passing Cape Nara. Fortunately for Nasmith and his crew, a strong bottom current broke the anchor wires of the net just where "E11" came across it. Thanks to this, after a long and laborious manoeuvre, the submarine managed to squeeze between the net and the bottom.⁶⁵ At 7:00 a.m., she reached Akbaş Bay (about 4 km northeast of Cape Nara), where Nasmith spotted the hospital ship "Ziya" through the periscope, along with several transport ships including "Haleb" (3648 GRT). A torpedo fired towards the latter hit her bow from starboard, which resulted in the sinking of the vessel in shallow water (with superstructures protruding above the surface), but only three days later, the "Haleb" was salvaged and towed to Istanbul for repairs.⁶⁶

Continuing her cruise towards the Sea of Marmara, "E11" surfaced in the vicinity of Doğanaslan (now Demirtepe), to recharge her batteries. Soon after, she came across the gunboat "Aydın Reis," on her way from Istanbul to the Dardanelles,⁶⁷ on board which (a fact that Nasmith obviously could not have known) were the staff officers of Adm. Guido von Usedom – the German commander of the Black Sea straits. Both vessels undertook a fruitless exchange of artillery fire. Due to the still too low battery level, "E11" was unable to dive and carry out a torpedo attack.⁶⁸ Nasmith decided against firing a torpedo while on the surface, probably because this would have involved getting within the range of "Aydın Reis"'s guns, and such a risk was not worth taking.⁶⁹

In the period when Nasmith reappeared in the Sea of Marmara, the activity of warships was – for this basin – relatively intense. The Turks, already aware that the mine-field and nets laid in the Dardanelles were not able to prevent enemy submarines from passing through the strait, regularly patrolled the Sea of Marmara on the east-west axis, using for this purpose, among others, the torpedo cruiser "Peyk-i Şevket," as well as the destroyers "Gayret-i Vataniyye," "Yadigâr-ı Millet," "Basra" and "Yarhisar." In addition to "E11," another Allied submarine operated in the aforementioned waters,

⁶⁵ Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 12–122.

⁶⁶ *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, p. 24; Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 39.

⁶⁷ Displacement 503 t; launched in 1912 at St Nazaire; machinery: 2 SACA St Nazaire 1025 hp steam turbines; speed: 10 kts; armament: 2 x 100 mm quick-firing guns, 2 x 47 mm quick-firing guns, 2 x 7,6 mm machine guns; crew: 14 officers and 61 seamen, Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 166.

⁶⁸ Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 39; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 122; *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 24–25.

⁶⁹ Rudenno writes that Nasmith, using the speed advantage of the surfaced "E11," maintained a distance that prevented the gunboat from conducting effective fire, which eventually prompted the Turks to stop the clash. Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 237.

namely “E14,” commanded by Lt. Cmdr. Edward Courtney Boyle. At midnight on 6 August, the two British submarines met west of Marmara Archipelago. Their commanders agreed on the joint conduct of the offensive operations. However, this plan was quickly thwarted by the Ottoman Gotha WD 1 seaplane with the tactical number 286 (German crew: pilot Jansen and observer Thiele), which spotted the submarines on the surface and launched an attack on “E11” with two hand-dropped bombs (fig. 6). It did not score any hits but forced the enemy submarines to separate temporarily.⁷⁰

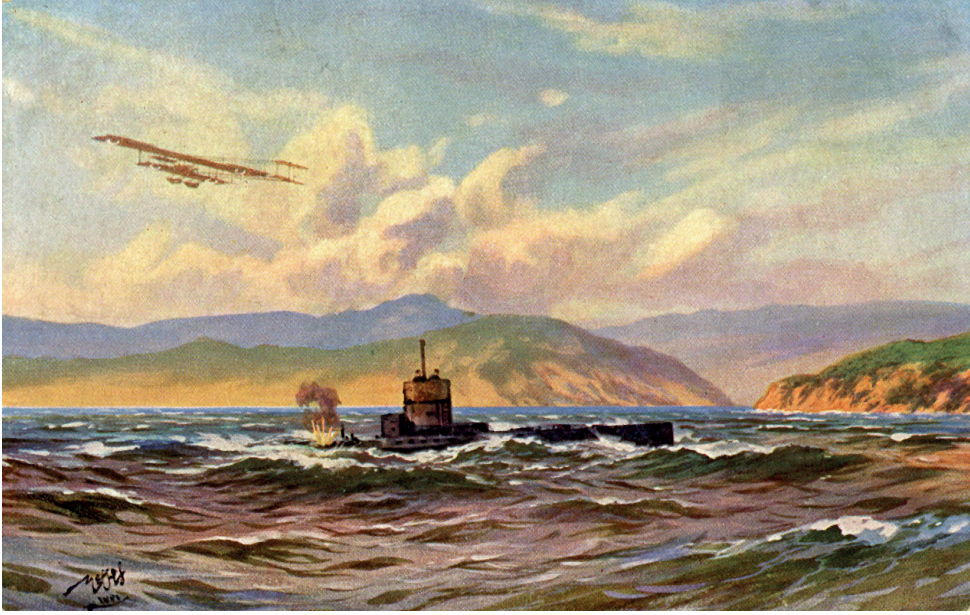


Figure 6. An Ottoman airplane dropping bombs on a British submarine near Bolayır – a painting by an Ottoman artist dated 1915/1916 and reproduced on a postcard

Source: Piotr Nykiel's collection.

When the threat ceased, Nasmith and Boyle reestablished communication, as a result of which they jointly followed the torpedo cruiser “Peyk-i Şevket,” starting at 3:00 p.m.⁷¹ Finally, after taking up a convenient position, “E11” launched a torpedo attack and hit

70 Cenk Avcı, *The Skies of Gallipoli* (İstanbul: Nart Yayıncılık, 2003), 201–202; Cenk Avcı, *Çanakkale Cephesinde Hava Savaşları* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Askerî Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2009), 139.

71 Displacement 775 t; launched in 1906 in Kiel; machinery: 2 “Germania” 5100 hp turbines; speed: 18 kts; armament: 2 x 105 mm L/40 quick-firing guns, 6 x 57 mm L/40 guns, 2 x 37 mm quick-firing guns, 2 machine guns, 3 x 450 mm torpedo tubes; crew: 145 men. Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 148–149.

the Ottoman warship in the starboard between the funnels.⁷² The heavily-damaged cruiser prevented herself from sinking by digging her bow into the beach near Güvercinlik (between the villages of Selim Paşa [today Bigados] and Celaliye). The British, however, did not let up. “E11,” still submerged, fired another torpedo, but this time missed. The surfaced “E14” tried to join the action, but “Peyk-i Şevket”’s artillerymen managed to keep her at a distance, making it impossible to carry out an effective attack. The Ottoman torpedo cruiser avoided sinking, but serious damage (flooded boilers and engine room) eliminated her from service for almost two years.⁷³ However, most of her crew was saved (four sailors did not survive the British attack) (fig. 7).⁷⁴

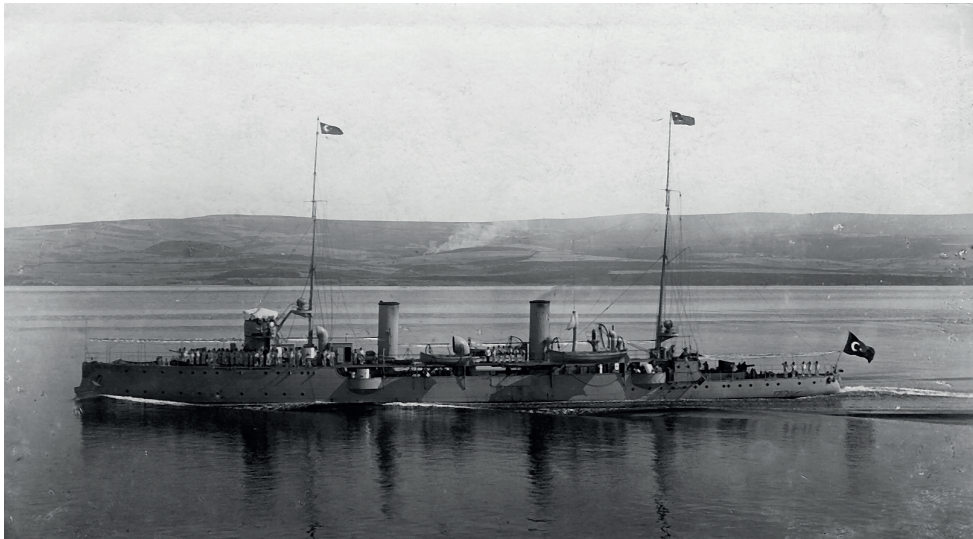


Figure 7. Peyk-i Şevket-class torpedo cruiser

Source: Piotr Nykiel's collection.

On 7 August, the two submarines jointly shelled the road in the Bolayır area (the narrowest section of the Gallipoli Peninsula) with their guns, paralysing for some time the transfer of reinforcements for Turkish troops defending the Suvla area, where the British had landed several hours earlier. Nasmith and Boyle managed to inflict some

⁷² Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 282.

⁷³ The hull was temporarily patched up and the water pumped out, after which “Peyk-i Şevket” was towed to Istanbul, where she arrived on 9 August at about 9:00 a.m. Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 123. The complete overhaul of this vessel was only completed in 1917. Gülerüz and Langensiepen, *Osmanlı Donanması*, 112; Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 37.

⁷⁴ Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 122–123.

losses on the Ottoman infantry, though it is difficult to estimate the extent of them. However, the Turks quickly brought field artillery to the area, and so forced the submarines to stop the action.⁷⁵

At about 5:00 a.m. on the following day, "E11" came across the battleship "Barbaros Hareddin" again between Gelibolu and Doğanaslan (fig. 8).⁷⁶ She was only being escorted by the torpedo boat "Sivrihisar."⁷⁷ As a result of an attack launched by Nasmith, the Ottoman battleship was hit by a torpedo at the starboard at the level of the 8th compartment. Despite the flooding of the right boiler, the immobilisation of one turbine and an electricity failure, the ship, which could already only manage a speed of 3 knots, made an attempt to manoeuvre in order to avoid being hit again. However, the water penetrated into other compartments, which caused the tilt of the significantly-overloaded battleship to increase rapidly.⁷⁸ Finally, about 30 minutes after being torpedoed, the old battleship lay on starboard and sank along with 258 crew (including 21 officers). "Sivrihisar" and the destroyer "Basra,"⁷⁹ which was just passing by then on her way from Bandırma to Çanakkale, managed to save 51 officers (among them the deputy commander of the Ottoman Navy, Capt. Arif Bey and the commander of "Barbaros Hayreddin" Capt. Muzaffer [Adil]) and 347 seamen, and transport them to the port of Gelibolu. During the rescue operation itself, Nasmith made an unsuccessful attempt to torpedo "Sivrihisar,"⁸⁰ which undoubtedly did not reflect well on his "chivalry" (fig. 9).

75 Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 237–239.

76 Full displacement 10 670 t; launched in 1890 at Wilhelmshaven as "Kurfürst Friedrich Wilhelm," in 1910 sold to the Ottoman Empire; machinery: 2 10,110 hp turbines; speed: 10 kts; armament: 4 x 280 mm L/40 guns, 2 x 280 mm L/35 guns, 6 x 105 mm L/35 quick-firing guns, 6 x 88 mm L/30r quick-firing guns, 12 machine guns, 3 x 450 mm torpedo tubes; crew: 600 men. Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 140–141. More about the service history of "Barbaros Hayreddin" in: Piotr Nykiel, "Pancerniki typu «Brandenburg» w służbie tureckiej," part 1, *Okrety Wojenne* 5 (2012), 115: 20–29 and *Okrety Wojenne* 6 (2012), 116: 9–13.

77 Displacement 97 t; launched in 1907 in Chalons-sur-Saône; machinery: 1 Schneider & Cie 2200 hp turbine; speed: 16 kts; armament: 2 x 37 mm quick-firing guns and 3 x 450 mm torpedo tubes; crew: 3 officers and 17–20 seamen (in 1915 32 Turks and 4 Germans). Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 156–157.

78 At that time, "Barbaros Hayreddin" was carrying a significant load of ammunition for the troops fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula. It consisted of 400 rounds for 105 mm howitzers, 4836 rounds for field guns, 1791 rounds for mountain guns and 9600 hand grenades, Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 282; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 124.

79 Displacement 284 t; launched in 1907 in Bordeaux; machinery: 2 SACAG 5950 hp turbines; speed: 17 kts; armament: 1 x 65 mm L/50 quick-firing gun, 6 x 47 mm L/50 quick-firing guns, 2 x 450 mm torpedo tubes; crew: 7 officers and 60 seamen (in 1915 74 Turks and 17 Germans). Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 158.

80 Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 12, *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 25–26; According to Langensiepen and Gülerüz (*The Ottoman*, 39) the ship that avoided being sunk by a hair's breadth was "Basra."

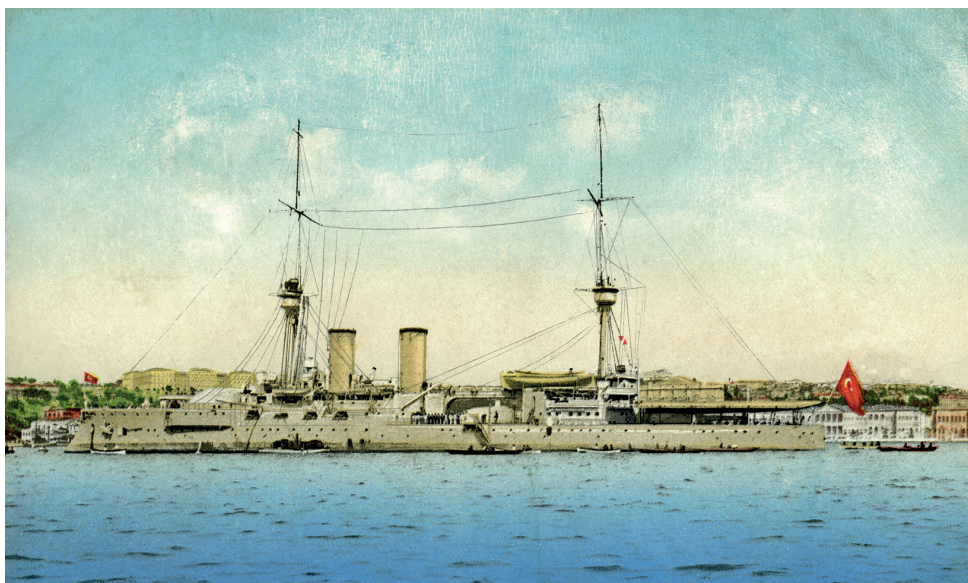


Figure 8. “Barbaros Hayreddin” battleship

Source: postcard issued by E.F. Rochat, Constantinople, Piotr Nykiel's collection.

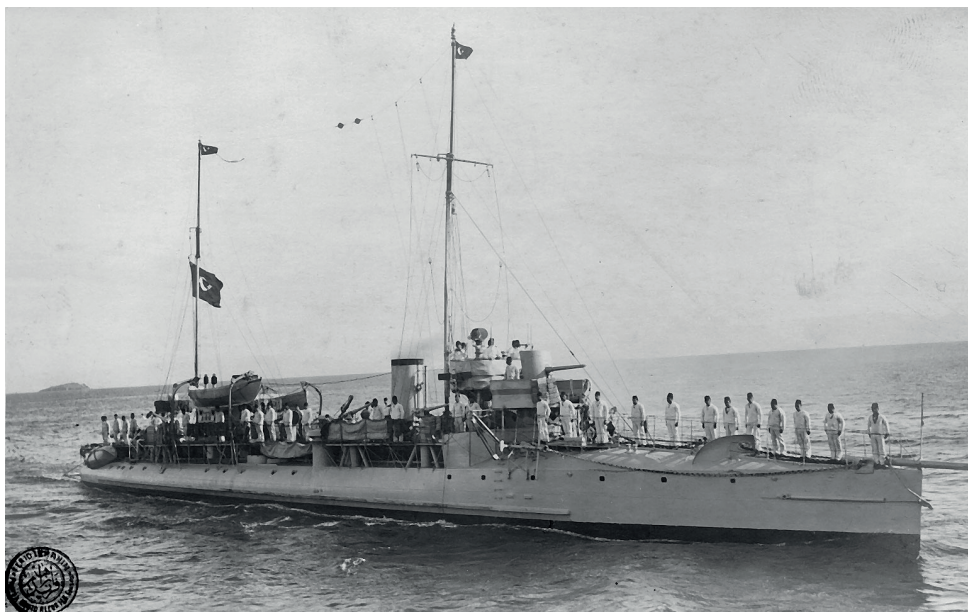


Figure 9. “Basra” destroyer in 1911

Source: A postcard issued by R. Guilleminot, Boespflug et Cie., Paris, Piotr Nykiel's collection.

While near Doğanaslan at 12:45 p.m. on 8 August, Nasmith's submarine also attacked the transport ship "Mahmud Şevket Paşa" (2690 GRT), which was then acting as a guard ship. The Turkish vessel headed towards the shore, where she intended to beach due to the risk of being torpedoed. "E11" and "E14," which joined her during the clash, only fired their guns, scoring several hits.⁸¹ On the same day, the crew of "E14," which was finishing her patrol on the Sea of Marmara, transferred two torpedoes to "E11".⁸²

Between 9 and 10 August, Nasmith sank two small sailing ships and stopped and searched the hospital ship "Ziya." Having determined that she was not carrying materials or persons prohibited by conventions, he allowed her to continue her voyage.⁸³ Then "E11" used her gun to shell the railway station in Mudanya, scoring three hits on the main building. The Turks, who shelled the surfaced enemy from the shore, prevented any further destruction.⁸⁴

On 11 August, the British submarine was spotted by the "Sivrihisar" torpedo boat, which was just returning to Istanbul. The shelled "E11" dived but did not undertake a torpedo attack. After some time, however, she appeared near San Stefano, where she sunk two sailing ships with her gun.⁸⁵

Two days later, Nasmith's submarine approached the port of Erdek, but she left before long, having found nothing to sink. On the same day, however, the small freighter "İsfahan" (843 GRT) became her victim. "E11" managed to take her by surprise at the Haydarpaşa quay (on the Asian side of Istanbul), while unloading coal for the Berlin–Baghdad railway. The ship sank in shallow water, but was salvaged the very next day and moored in the Kadıköy harbour (today a district of Istanbul located southeast of Haydarpaşa railway station).⁸⁶

Between 14 and 21 August, "E11" patrolled the Sea of Marmara without encountering any Ottoman vessels. Nasmith used this period to communicate via radio the need for gun ammunition, which was running out. It was sent on board the "E2" submarine, which met "E11" on 15 August near the island of İmralı.⁸⁷ Thus, the very next day, Nasmith was able to fire fifteen rounds at the railway line and viaduct near Gebze,

81 According to Langensiepen and Gülerüz (*The Ottoman*, 168) the ship was, however, hit with a torpedo fired by "E14." Sometime later, "Mahmud Şevket Paşa" was towed to Istanbul where she underwent an overhaul. It was not until 1917 that she returned to service.

82 Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 168; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 124.

83 *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 26. This clearly undermines Serkan Ertem's thesis about "E11" attacking hospital ships. We will come back to this issue later in the essay.

84 Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 124.

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.; Langensiepen and Gülerüz, *The Ottoman*, 39.

87 Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 124–125.

scoring several inconsequential hits on its pillars.⁸⁸ On 18 August, along with “E2,” he again shelled the road in the Bolayır area of the Gallipoli Peninsula.⁸⁹

On the night of 20/21 August, “E11”’s first lieutenant, Lt. Guy D’Oyly Hughes, went ashore near Gebze, with the intention of planting explosives under the railway viaduct. After reaching the vicinity of the target, he realised that his target was guarded, so there could be no question of destroying it by himself alone. Therefore, he decided to place his explosives in the nearest culvert he encountered in the railway embankment. While arming it, he was heard by a three-man Turkish patrol. D’Oyly Hughes ran for about a mile in complete darkness, occasionally firing a pistol at the soldiers chasing him, while being fired at himself with rifles. He then jumped into the sea and, after many adventures, he finally got on board his submarine at dawn, in a state of extreme exhaustion. The bomb he had planted exploded, destroying the railway tracks.⁹⁰

On 22 August, “E11” came across the tug “Dofen” (124 GRT) between Marmara Island and Gelibolu. The boat was pulling four sailing barges loaded with ammunition and soldiers, and the entire convoy was being protected by the destroyer “Yarhisar.”⁹¹ The warships began to fire at each other with their guns, but after a while “E11” had to dive due to the superiority of the destroyer’s firepower. When she did not appear on the surface for a long period of time, the “Yarhisar”’s commander decided to sail away because, according to the orders he had received, he was to cover not only this convoy, but also all other vessels in this area that were heading to the Dardanelles. To make matters worse, just after losing the escort, “Dofen” also lost her drive as a result of an engine failure. So, when “E11” resurfaced, she had a motionless and completely defenceless convoy in front of her that she could shell with her gun with impunity. After a while, however, the surveillance ship “İskenderun”⁹² appeared (she was identified by Nasmith as an armed tugboat). Her commander engaged in an exchange of fire with the submarine, but quickly realised that his superiority in firepower would be of little use in the face of the fact that the opponent was more manoeuvrable. It was

88 Usborne, *Smoke on the Horizon*, 225; Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 241.

89 Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 284.

90 Ibid.; Usborne, *Smoke on the Horizon*, 225–233; Wemyss, *The Navy*, 157–159; Thomas R. Frame and Greg J. Swinden, *First in, Last out. The Hague Navy at Gallipoli* (Kenthurst: Kangaroo Press, 1990), 102.

91 Displacement 284 t; launched in 1907 in Bordeaux; machinery: 2 SACAG 5950 hp turbines; speed: 17 kts; armament: 1 x 65 mm L/50 quick-firing gun, 6 x 47 mm L/50 quick-firing gun, 2 x 450 mm torpedo tubes; crew: 7 officers and 60 seamen (in 1915 74 Turks and 17 Germans). Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Navy*, 158. Usborne (*Smoke on the Horizon*, 234) and Rudenno (*Gelibolu*, 243) claim that the destroyer (not identified by Nasmith as “Yarhisar”) escorted at least three tugboats pulling about eight sailing ships. This information, however, is not confirmed by Turkish sources.

92 Displacement 142 t; launched in 1895 in Paisley; machinery: Ross & Duncan steam turbine; speed: 5 kts; armament: 1 x 37 mm quick-firing gun, 2 x 47 mm quick-firing gun; crew (in 1915): 6 officers, 6 seamen from the Ottoman Navy, 8 merchant navy men. Güleriyüz and Langensiepen, *Osmanlı Donanması*, 181.

therefore only a matter of time before “İskenderun” was hit. Out of concern for his own vessel and her crew, the Turk withdrew, thus finally enabling Nasmith to sink the defective tugboat and two barges.⁹³ Twenty crew members of the sunken vessels (including “Dofen”'s commander Lt. Ahmed Nazmi [Gökdeniz] and 12 seamen of the Ottoman Navy⁹⁴) were rescued by the crew of “E11” and then transferred to the deck of a sailing ship that was stopped a little later. In order to be able to take the survivors on-board, her crew was forced to throw the cargo of watermelons into the sea. It is worth of mentioning here that in addition to the Greek captain and the five- or six-person crew, two Albanian owners of the watermelons were also on board this sailing ship, i.e. representatives of the ethnic minorities that were already deeply conflicted about the Ottoman state. No wonder that they decided not to take the “Dofen”'s crew to Tekirdağ, as Nasmith told them to, but instead leave it on the desert island of Ekinlik (in the Marmara Islands archipelago). To avoid the inevitable death of hunger and thirst, Capt. Ahmed Nazmi and his men had to take control of the sailing ship by force.⁹⁵ Let us also mention that British submarines operating in the Sea of Marmara did not always have to get provisions by force. They could also count on voluntary cooperation from the representatives of ethnic minorities living in this region. In ciphertext of 31 May 1915, the Directorate of Public Security informed the office of governor of sanjak in Çanakkale about the capture of the Haçadorian and Dikran tradesman brothers, who had been secretly supplying enemy submarines.⁹⁶

On the night of 22/23 August, Nasmith's submarine headed with “E2” towards Mudanya, so as to fire again at the railway station there. However, most of the shells hit nearby houses.⁹⁷

The next day, “E11” received radio information about the increased activity of transport ships in the Dardanelles area. At 7:20 a.m. on 25 August, having passed Gelibolu and entered the strait, Nasmith saw several ships through the periscope anchoring in Akbaş Bay, located on the eastern shore of the Gallipoli Peninsula. They were being protected by the gunboat “Durak Reis,”⁹⁸ and it was she that was chosen by the command-

93 Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 190–195. British sources agree that only one barge sank.

94 With the exception of a German mechanic, all were former crew of the “Mesudiye” battleship, sunk on 13 December 1914 by “B11” (Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 188–190). Reportedly, a director of a German bank from Istanbul was also among the survivors from the convoy attacked by “E11.” He was sailing to Çanakkale with a significant sum of money, which he threw into the sea in panic. Wemyss, *The Navy*, 160; Osborne, *Smoke on the Horizon*, 236.

95 Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 198–201.

96 COA, cat. no. DH.ŞFR./53-185-1.

97 Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 125.

98 Displacement 413 t; launched in 1911 in Granville; machinery: 2 SAFC Granville 850 hp turbines; speed: 11 kts; armament: 3 x 75 mm quick-firing gun, 2 x 47 mm quick-firing gun, 2 x 7.6 mm machine gun; crew: 12 officers and 48 seamen. Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 166. Besbelli

er of “E11” as his first target, although the torpedo passed under her keel and hit the transport ship “Kios” (3304 GRT), which had already run aground on 17 August after an attack by British aircraft. Thus, Nasmith only completed the work of destruction, causing the ship to lie on the port side and sink in shallow water, with a portion of her stern and starboard protruding above the surface.⁹⁹ After this attack, “E11” had to lurk for a while to avoid being destroyed by “Durak Reis,” which was tracking her. When the gunboat gave up, Nasmith attacked again at 10:25 a.m., hitting the midships of the “Haleb” passenger-transport ship (3648 BTR) with a torpedo – the same vessel that had already fallen prey to him just 20 days earlier. She sank with a slight tilt to the starboard. The entire stern and much of the midship remained above the surface. The third and last victim of “E11” in Akbaş Bay was “Tenedos” (3564 GRT),¹⁰⁰ which must have arrived from Istanbul with a load of artillery ammunition shortly before the British submarine turned up, because the torpedo detonated the entire contents of the front hold, leading to the quick loss of the ship. As she had 13.5 m under her keel in this place, only the ends of her two masts protruded above the surface after she sunk (fig. 10).

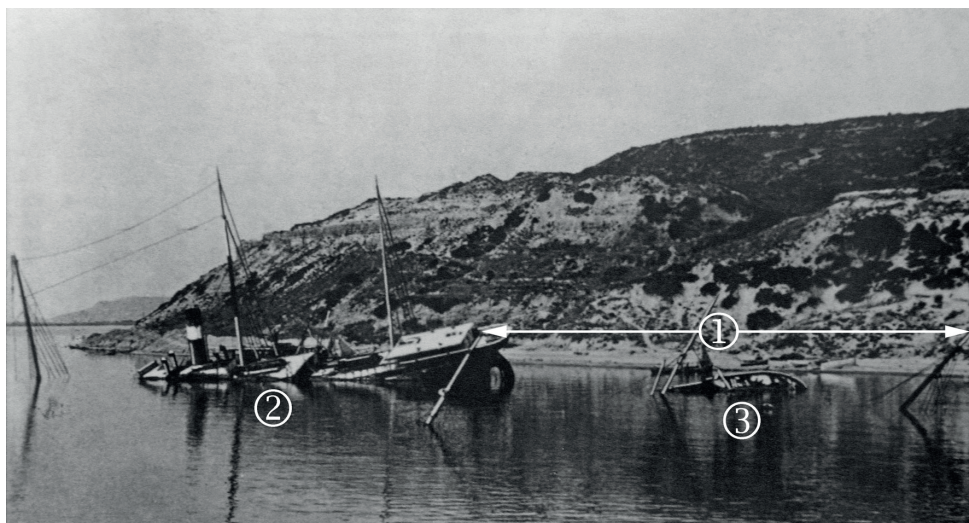


Figure 10. Ships sunk by “E11” in Akbaş Bay on 25 August 1915: 1. “Tenedos,” 2. “Haleb,” 3. “Kios”

Source: Piotr Nykiel's collection.

(*Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 285) incorrectly claims it was the “Burak Reis” gunboat. It also says, although it is the only source to do so, that the protection of ships was provided, along with her, by the “Hamidabad” torpedo boat. Osborne (*Smoke on the Horizon*, 237) in turn writes that in addition to the transport vessels, there was also a gunboat and a destroyer in Akbaş Bay.

99 Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 244.

100 Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 125; Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 39–40.

The events that took place in Akbaş Bay on 25 August still arouse controversy and negative emotions today, especially in Turkey, because about 200 wounded soldiers who were to be transported to the reserve hospital in Selimiye barracks in Istanbul were killed on the “Haleb” ship (fig. 11).



Figure 11. Cemetery in Akbaş where the Ottoman wounded soldiers, killed in the “Haleb” ship, were buried

Source: a photo © Piotr Nykiel.

In some publications, as well as in media materials that appear every year on the anniversary of the landings on the Gallipoli Peninsula, accusations against Capt. Nasmith of committing the war crime of sinking the “hospital ship” “Haleb” are still articulated¹⁰¹ – although it must be admitted that in recent years this happens less and less frequently. Therefore, it is worth considering here the legitimacy of such serious allegations. “Haleb” was a passenger/transport ship¹⁰² which, like the other two victims of “E11” from Akbaş Bay, brought ammunition and other war materials from Istanbul, probably soldiers too, and on the way back was to take the wounded. Thus, she was not

¹⁰¹ For example, in the article entitled *Haleb Vapuru 105 Yıl Sonra Çanakkale’de Hatırlandı*, published on the news portal ViraHaber.com (accessed 20.07.2022, <https://www.virahaber.com/haleb-vapuru-105-yil-sonra-canakkalede-hatirlandi-57970h.htm>), Gökhan Karakaş writes of “200 wounded soldiers and medical personnel in «Haleb» steamer belonging to the Red Crescent and sunk by «E11».” In a press release titled *Haleb Vapuru’ndaki 200 şehit* (accessed: 20.07.2022, https://www.sabah.com.tr/kultur_sanat/2014/03/18/haleb-vapurundaki-200-sehit) a journalist from the *Sabah* newspaper writes on the one hand about the sinking of “the «Haleb» steamer used as a hospital ship,” but on the other hand, objectively admits that this vessel did not have the emblems of the Red Crescent.

¹⁰² Launched in 1881 as “Aberdeen” at the Robert Napier & Sons shipyard in Glasgow, she was the first steam-powered Aberdeen Line ship, and had a load capacity of 3616 GRT, length 110.5 m, width 13.5 m, 45 first class passenger cabins and 650 third class. In 1906, she was sold to the Ottoman Empire and renamed “Haleb” (Aleppo). Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 205–206.

formally a hospital ship, which is clearly confirmed by the lack of an appropriate marking on the side of the wreck significantly protruding from the water and photographed between 25 August 1915 and 1919 (figs. 12 and 13).

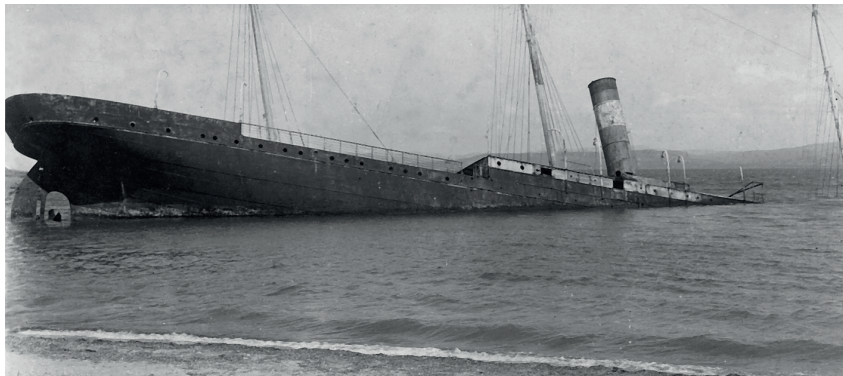


Figure 12. The wreck of "Haleb" in a picture taken in 1923 by a member of HMS "Royal Sovereign"'s crew

Source: Piotr Nykiel's collection.



Figure 13. The official Ottoman Red Crescent postcard showing the way regular hospital ships were marked

Source: Piotr Nykiel's collection.

We must note, however, that just 20 days before “Haleb”'s second sinking, the deputy director of the Ottoman Red Crescent, Dr. Basim Ömer, asked his Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform the Entente states through the U.S. Embassy in Istanbul that the “Akdeniz” steamer, adapted into a hospital ship, would be anchored in Akbaş Bay, in order to be used, if necessary, to transport the wounded.¹⁰³ So the same could have been true of “Haleb.” However, there is no evidence that the British were separately notified about this particular ship.¹⁰⁴ Even if they had received such information, it would be hard to expect Nasmith to approach each of the ships anchoring in Akbaş Bay and try to read their names (written in decorative Arabic calligraphy) through the periscope, due to lack of formal red crescent markings on the vessels. Thus, the Turks consciously took the risk of transporting the wounded in unmarked ships, knowing that they could be exposed to attack from an enemy submarine. It is enough to recall that “Haleb” herself had been sunk in the same place by “E11” just 20 days earlier. It cannot be ruled out that the above-mentioned letter of Dr. Basim Ömer was a direct reaction to this event. It only mentioned the “Akdeniz” steamer, because “Haleb” had just sunk, and probably no one knew yet whether it would be possible to salvage her and return her to service. On 30 August (five days after the second sinking of “Haleb”) Dr. Basim Ömer appealed again to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry¹⁰⁵ to make the enemy aware (again through the U.S. Embassy) that the merchant and passenger ships that bring soldiers and war materials to the Gallipoli Peninsula were taking the wounded on their way back. It is clear, however, from the content of this letter that these vessels were still not being properly marked, and it was very naive to expect that the British submarines, acting quickly and taking the enemy by surprise, would be able to distinguish a ship that had just arrived with supplies but had not yet had time to unload them, from one that was about to set out with the wounded on board. The accusations made against Nasmith up to the present day are therefore unfounded in this particular case.

It is worth mentioning here that Akbaş Bay was explored during the “First Polish Diving Expedition – Gallipoli, September 2011” project by Polish divers from the Shipwreck Expeditions Association.¹⁰⁶ Virtually all the wrecks in the Dardanelles area

¹⁰³ Ibid., 294–295.

¹⁰⁴ A document found by the author in the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul (COA, cat. no. HR.HMŞ. İŞO./67-14-1-9) says only that on 23 June, 1915 the Ottoman Foreign Ministry notified the Entente states (through the U.S. Embassy) on the conversion of the “Gülñihal” steamer and passenger ferries No. 61 and 62, belonging to Şirket-i Hayriyye to hospital vessels. This document does not mention “Haleb,” which of course does not exclude that in her case the note could have been sent at a later date, but for some reason was not preserved.

¹⁰⁵ COA, cat. no. HR.SYS./2179-3.

¹⁰⁶ The project was carried out by: Piotr Wytykowski (expedition leader, camera operator), Roman Zająder (expedition leader, underwater photographer), Piotr Nykiel (academic leader of the expedition), Tomasz and Anna Stopyra (expedition equipment providers), Aleksander Ostasz (camera operator),

which partially protruded above the water were cut up for scrap after 1918, and what remained of them under water was carried away over the following decades by storm waves and strong bottom current. This must have been the fate of the wrecks of the “Kios” and “Haleb” ships too, but the exploration of the places where they sank was prevented by the fact that they are currently located in a restricted area, belonging to a small harbour located in the southern part of Akbaş Bay (fig. 14).¹⁰⁷



Figure 14. The wooden plaque with the “Haleb”’s name that was on her stern

Source: Istanbul Naval Museum, photo © Piotr Nykiel.

Arkadiusz Kasjański (leader of underwater works, artistic setting of the expedition), Dariusz Pietruszka (medical protection, underwater photographer), Katarzyna Pietruszka (camera operator), Grzegorz Frass (underwater works), Jakub Trębacz (photographer, underwater works), Robert Piąsta (computer scientist, underwater works).

¹⁰⁷ Before the wreck of the last of those ships was cut up for scrap, which took place no earlier than in 1923 (cf. the handwritten caption on a photographic print in Piotr Nykiel’s collection – picture No. 11), a British soldier who participated in inventory work in the Dardanelles area dismantled a wooden plaque with the vessel’s name that was on her stern. He took this “trophy” to England and handed it over to Capt. Nasmith. In 2006, the latter’s son Prof. James Dunbar-Nasmith and grandson Duncan Dunbar-Nasmith gave it to a distinguished Turkish scuba diver Selçuk Kolay, who in turn donated the plaque to the collection of the Maritime Museum in Istanbul. Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 208; documentary *Çanakkale Şehitleri – Halep Vapuru*, accessed 20.07.2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUwykx0EyiA>.

So, the Polish team only had the opportunity to examine and inventory the wreck of “Tenedos,”¹⁰⁸ lying on her keel at a depth of 13.5 m. This vessel, unlike “Kios” and “Haleb,” sank with the stern facing the strait, which confirms her arrival in the bay shortly before the attack carried out by “E11” (ships moored in this place to wooden piers aft towards the Gallipoli Peninsula). The hull between the midship superstructure and the bow (which has only survived in the section from the stem to the hawses), on a length of over 40 m, is practically non-existent, which undoubtedly proves that the contents of the front hold exploded. The fact that artillery ammunition was transported in it is also confirmed by some artillery shells scattered around the wreckage. On the section from amidships to the stern, the hull, at a length of 49 m, although heavily overgrown with marine organisms, is relatively well preserved, including the main deck and remnants of the captain's bridge, the glazing of some portholes, and the rudder blade. The screw, probably still preserved, is already buried in the seabed. Until the exploration of “Tenedos” by the Shipwreck Expeditions team, the Turkish diving community was convinced that it was the wreck of “Haleb.” Although the arguments presented by the Polish side (the depth at which the ship rests and its position aft towards the strait) exclude such a possibility, many Turks still insist on their version of events (figs. 15–18).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ This ship was built by Armstrong, Mitchell & Co, Walker-on-Tyne. In the years 1889–1890 she sailed under the name “Italia” for the Hamburg America Line on the route from Hamburg to New York. From 1890, she operated for three years (for the same shipowner) on the Szczecin–New York route, and in the years 1894–1898 on the Hamburg–Boston–Baltimore line. In 1898, she was chartered for about a year by the Red Star Line shipowner, for which she operated on the routes Antwerp–New York and Antwerp–Philadelphia. In the years 1899–1900 she was chartered by the American Line; under whose flag she sailed on the routes Liverpool–Philadelphia and Hamburg–New York. In 1900, the ship was bought by the Slanan Line and renamed “Milano.” Under this name, the vessel operated the Hamburg–New York line. In 1903, the ship was sold to Deutsche Levante, which gave her her last name – “Tenedos.” Until the acquisition by the Ottoman Navy in 1914 the vessel operated connections between the Black Sea ports and New York and the Aegean ports. *The Ships List*, theshipslist.com, accessed 20.07.2022, <http://www.theshipslist.com/ships/descriptions/ShipsI-J.shtml>.

¹⁰⁹ The report from the “First Polish Diving Expedition – Gallipoli, September 2011” was not only published in Polish (Piotr Nykiel, Piotr Wytykowski and Roman Zajder, “Raport z ekspedycji Gallipoli 2011,” *Okrety Wojenne* 2 (2012), 112: 32–40), but also in English on Piotr Nykiel's website *Naval Operations in the Dardanelles*, navyingallipoli.com, accessed 20.07.2022, <http://www.navyingallipoli.com/nurki2011.html>. It was also presented by Piotr Wytykowski and Roma Zajder during the meeting of The Explorers Club in New York in 2012. cf. *The Explorers Log* 44 (2012), 4: 19.



Figure 15. The bow of "Tenedos" as seen from the blasted out-front hold. Photograph taken in 2011



Figure 16. A preserved part of "Tenedos"'s starboard in 2011



Figure 17. Stern deck of "Tenedos" in 2011



Figure 18. Stern of "Tenedos" in 2011

Source (Fig. 15–18): Dariusz Pietruszka, Zachodniopomorskie Stowarzyszenie Dziedzictwo Morza.

After the action in Akbaş Bay, "E11" turned back towards the Sea of Marmara and in the afternoon attacked the ship "Şam" (3662 GRT), near Gelibolu. However, the torpedo did not hit its target, and Nasmith's would-be victim headed for the nearest port, which was Çardak, located on the Asian shore of the Dardanelles, opposite Gelibolu. There, her captain hastily unloaded his cargo, which was most likely to have originally reached the harbour in Akbaş. Shortly after unloading had been completed, "E11" appeared at the approach to Çardak. The second attack on "Şam" ended with only moderate damage.¹¹⁰ On the same day, Nasmith's submarine came across an "old acquaintance" from her first patrol – the ship "Lilly Rickmers" (4081 GRT) – which was taken by surprise while unloading in the port on the island of Burgaz in the Princes' Islands archipelago.¹¹¹ This time the torpedo fired by him hit the target, but the damaged vessel managed to reach the Bosphorus, where she saved herself from sinking by running aground near the shore.¹¹² Let us recall here that according to Serkan Ertem, "Lilly Rickmers" was marked as a hospital ship during her first meeting with "E11," which took place on 1 June. Describing the second attack on this vessel, the aforementioned author does not explicitly write that this was still the case, but in support of his thesis that "E11" used to attack hospital ships, he quotes *in extenso* the official protest of the Ottoman Minister of War Enver Pasha.¹¹³ However, this document only refers to the "Biga" and "Haliç" ships.¹¹⁴ In the case of the former, the crime committed by the commander of the British submarine was a torpedo attack in the port of Mudanya on a vessel transporting mail, and in relation to the latter it was the gun shelling of a ship whose crew was just evacuating after running aground. Thus, none of these incidents concerned the hospital ship. Moreover, these events took place on 6 and 7 July 1915 respectively, i.e. at a time when "E11" was not even in the Sea of Marmara! The submarine condemned by Enver Pasha must have been the "E7." Therefore, it is difficult to fathom what Ertem wanted to achieve by publishing false information, "supported" by a document that had no connection with what he was writing about. Apparently, this author, for reasons known only to himself, decided to join the group of Turkish historians and journalists trying at all costs to turn Capt. Nasmith into a war criminal. In his next monograph, however, Ertem abandoned such insinuations.¹¹⁵

110 On 30 August, the ship, escorted by a destroyer, was towed to Istanbul by the tugboat "Kudret." Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 125–126.

111 *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 28.

112 Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 126; Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 40.

113 Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 126, document from the collection of the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul with the cat. no. HR.SYS./2099-5.

114 After some time, however, it turned out that one of these ships was not "Haliç" but "İntizam," cf. Güleriyüz and Langensiepen, *Osmanlı Donanması*, 50.

115 Cf. Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 209.

On the same day, “E11” met “E2” near Doğanaslan. On 28 August, both British submarines shelled the Mudanya railway station for the third time. This time they had to retreat once again, after the Turks responded with fire from the shore.¹¹⁶

On 2 September, Nasmith established radio contact with the base at Mudros and obtained permission to end the patrol. The next day, before “E11” dived in the Dardanelles, she sank several sailing ships with her gun. Having crossed the strait without any problems, the submarine reached Imroz at 10:30 a.m. on the same day. During her 29-day-long second patrol in the Sea of Marmara and in the Dardanelles, “E11” sank a battleship, three merchant ships (one of them twice!), a tugboat and over 20 sailing ships. She also severely damaged a torpedo cruiser and five merchant ships. The outcome of the second patrol was therefore incomparably more favourable than the first one, both in terms of losses inflicted on the Ottoman Navy and on the transport fleet. In the case of the latter, the total tonnage of definitively sunken steam-powered vessels amounted to 10,640 GRT, what was more than 470 percent higher. However, the number of vessels erroneously considered by Nasmith as sunk increased from 1 to 3.

Table 2. Ottoman and German vessels (except sailing ships) sunk or damaged by “E11” during her second patrol (5 August – 3 September 1915)

NAME OF THE VESSEL	CLASS	DISPLACEMENT (t)	TONNAGE (GTD)	FATE OF THE VESSEL ACCORDING TO BRITISH SOURCES		FATE OF THE VESSEL ACCORDING TO TURKISH SOURCES	
				SUNK	DAMAGED	SUNK	DAMAGED
“Haleb”	transport ship	—	3,648	x			x
“Peyk-i Şevket”	torpedo cruiser	775	—		x		x
“Barbaros Hayreddin”	battleship	10,670	—	x		x	
“Mahmud Şevket Paşa”	guard ship	—	2,690		x		x
“İsfahan”	transport ship	—	843	x			x
“Dofen”	tug	—	124	x		x	
“Kios”	transport ship	—	3,304	x		x	
“Haleb”*	transport ship	—	3,648	x		x	
“Tenedos”	transport ship	—	3,564	x		x	
“Şam”	transport ship	—	3,662	x			x

¹¹⁶ Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 126; Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 209.

NAME OF THE VESSEL	CLASS	DISPLACEMENT (t)	TONNAGE (GTD)	FATE OF THE VESSEL ACCORDING TO BRITISH SOURCES		FATE OF THE VESSEL ACCORDING TO TURKISH SOURCES	
				SUNK	DAMAGED	SUNK	DAMAGED
"Lilly Rickmers" (G)	transport ship	–	4,081		x		x
IN TOTAL			25,555	8	3	5	6

Note: In the table, the vessels damaged according to Turkish sources also include those salvaged and restored to service. * – second and final sinking; (G) – a vessel under the German flag. Source: compiled by the author.

On 6 November, "E11" departed Kephalo Bay for her last patrol in the Sea of Marmara. After a smooth passage through the minefield and anti-submarine nets laid in the Dardanelles, she emerged around noon in the vicinity of Gelibolu. The next day, Nasmith achieved his first success near Karaburun, sinking the sailing ship "Evliyadifis." On the same day, "E11" headed for Bandırma Bay, where she was supposed to let a Greek agent disembark. However, a sudden deterioration of the weather made this task impossible.¹¹⁷

On 9 November, after the storm had subsided, the British submarine attacked two ferries operating between the two shores of the Bosphorus.¹¹⁸ In both cases, the torpedoes launched by Nasmith missed, probably because the surface current was still stronger than usual, and perhaps even reversed by the storm. On the same day, however, the seamen from "E11" boarded the sailing ship "Hildon," which was carrying barrels of olive oil. The vessel was sunk with explosives. On the night of 9/10 November, the Greek spy finally disembarked from the submarine near Edincik (about 10 km west of the town of Bandırma).¹¹⁹

Between 10 and 11 November, "E11" sank two sailing ships, one near Tekirdağ, the other near Türkeli Island.¹²⁰

On 12 November, Nasmith intended to attack the Ottoman torpedo boats anchoring off Haydarpaşa, but eventually gave up, presumably considering such an action too

117 Langensiepen and Güteryüz, *The Ottoman*, 43; Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 231. As Rudenno claims (*Gelibolu*, 269), a strong wind swept away the folding boat on which the spy was supposed to get ashore.

118 As the activities of British submarines in the straits and in the Sea of Marmara intensified, the Turks increasingly began to use passenger ferries for military purposes (primarily to transport war materials and soldiers, including wounded). In peacetime, those vessels used to operate between the two shores of the Bosphorus and on the Sea of Marmara. This decision was taken not only due to the increasing losses in the very modest number of transport ships, but also to the fact that these ferries had a small draught, thanks to which they could operate in shallow coastal waters, the depth of which did not allow submarines to carry out their torpedo attacks safely. Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 280.

119 Ibid.; Ertem, *Canakkale*, 127.

120 Ertem, *Canakkale*, 127.

risky, given that it was the middle of the day and, as always, the waters were crowded. For some time, he also used the periscope to watch the ferries plying between the two banks of the Bosphorus and the hospital ship “Gülñihal” but did not take any offensive action. The next day he sank several small sailing ships near the island of Sivri (the westernmost of the Princes’ Islands).¹²¹

Two days later, “E11” reappeared in Akbaş Bay, where this time she came across the Austro-Hungarian ship “Arimatea” (3891 GRT), which she sunk with a torpedo hit to the bow. Since this vessel went down in shallow water, and her damage turned out to be not very extensive, she was salvaged a few weeks later and, after the necessary repairs, restored to service. The third encounter of “E11” with “Lilly Rickmers” took place in the same location too. However, the explosion of the torpedo fired in her direction was mitigated by the torpedo net, so the ship reached Istanbul on her own and was repaired there.¹²² Incidentally, it is bizarre that one merchant ship was attacked three times by the same submarine over a few months, and each time the ship got away unscathed, even though the submarine was commanded by an outstanding officer. From Akbaş Bay, “E11” headed for Çardak, where on the same day she torpedoed the ship “Despina” (774 GRT), which was carrying wheat, causing it to sink. Three crew members of the aforementioned vessel were killed as a result of the attack.¹²³

Between 16 and 25 November, despite the adverse weather conditions, Nasmith managed to sink two sailing ships near Tekirdağ.¹²⁴ On 26 November, in still stormy weather, he directed his submarine to Erdek Bay, where, having surfaced at noon, he used his gun to attack the ships “Gelibolu” (284 GRT) and “Edremit” (414 GRT), as well as the Ottoman Navy’s tug “Sa’na.” However, Turkish land artillery forced him to dive before long. Around 4:00 p.m., “E11” surfaced again and continued to fire on these vessels until dark. As a result, “Gelibolu” sank along with two crew members, but was most likely salvaged the next day (which was certainly not difficult, given the size of the ship and the fact that she was sunk by fire from a 76 mm gun, not a torpedo). “Edremit” and the “Sa’na” tug suffered damage. Two seamen were wounded on board the former vessel.¹²⁵ From 27 November to 2 December, Nasmith was unable to carry out any action, due to stormy weather.¹²⁶

¹²¹ Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43.

¹²² Ibid.; Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915, 35; Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 232.

¹²³ Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 127.

¹²⁴ One of them was presumably the barge No. 58 registered in Istanbul Yağkapanı harbour and leased by the Kayacıoğlu Hasan and Osman Aga brothers. COA, cat. no. BEO/4385-328835-1-2.

¹²⁵ COA, cat. no. DH. EUM. VRK./25-52. Ertem (*Çanakkale*, 128) and Langensiepen and Güleriyüz (*The Ottoman*, 43) mention neither the casualties among the crews of the above-mentioned ships, nor that “Gelibolu” was salvaged. In their opinion, the “Sa’na” tugboat did not receive a single hit.

¹²⁶ Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 128.

At 12:30 p.m. on 3 December, "E11" attacked the destroyer "Yarhisar" near Yalova. The explosion of the torpedo at the level of the rear boiler tore the ship in two. The surviving crew members (43 men) were taken by the British both into the submarine and on her upper deck and then transferred on board a sailing ship that the submarine encountered a little later. Six officers (including one German), two German NCOs, a ship's medic and 29 sailors (including six Germans) were killed.¹²⁷

The next day, "E11" spotted the German steamer "Bosporus" (2995 GRT), which was heading towards Bandırma, under the protection of the Ottoman torpedo boat "Berk-i Efşan."¹²⁸ The British submarine tracked both vessels for some time. When the escorting ship disappeared into the fog,¹²⁹ Nasmith decided to take the opportunity to attack "Bosporus" with his gun. The shelling caused a fire on board the ship and alerted the torpedo boat, which emerged from the fog and tried to ram the aggressor. However, "E11" managed to dive at the last moment, thereby avoiding a collision with "Berk-i Efşan." By now in flames and tilting considerably, "Bosporus" was abandoned by her German crew. Despite the help that came after some time from the port of Bandırma, the ship could not be saved.¹³⁰

On 5 December, "E11" sank a barge named "Elenora" near Kemer. At 8:20 p.m., the submarine came across the passenger steamer "Rehber" (287 GRT) near the island of Yumurta, sailing from Gelibolu (before the outbreak of the war she operated connections on the Bosphorus). When the shelled ship began to sink, the British submarine picked up five crew members from her deck, including the captain, who revealed that another steamer was to leave the port of Erdek the following day.¹³¹

So, the next day, Nasmith directed his submarine towards Erdek, where, thanks to the testimony of the "Rehber"'s captain, he used his gun to sink the passenger ship

¹²⁷ Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 128.

¹²⁸ Displacement 230 t; launched in 1892 in Istanbul; machinery: 2 Germania 3500 hp turbines; speed: 17 kts; armament: 2 x 47 mm L/50 quick-firing gun, 2 x 47 mm L/30 quick-firing gun, 2 x 428 mm torpedo tubes; crew: 8 officers and 42 seamen (in 1915 58 Turks and 4 Germans). Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 155.

¹²⁹ The authors of *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915* (36) are the only ones who claim that it was not fog, but smoke from the "Bosporus" funnels.

¹³⁰ Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 128; Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43.

¹³¹ Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43; *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 36. In addition, the French-speaking captain revealed a lot of other information, including on the methods of delivering reinforcements to the Gallipoli Peninsula, on the number of German submarines and Turkish transport ships in Istanbul and on the activity of the Ottoman aviation in the Istanbul, Tekirdağ and Gelibolu areas, Rudenko, *Gelibolu*, 273. It seems that most of the "Rehber"'s crew was abandoned by the captain and his officers. A similar example of the low morale of officers of the Ottoman merchant fleet was previously witnessed on 7 November 1914 in the Dardanelles, cf. Nykiel, *Wyprawa*, 121.

“Eser-i Merhamet” (230 GRT).¹³² A day later, “E11” rammed a small sailing ship in the same area, then headed towards Gelibolu and, at about 8:00 p.m., fired her gun at the minelayer “İntibah,” near Şarköy.¹³³ However, the Ottoman ship returned fire and attempted to ram the submarine, forcing the aggressor to dive. The damage sustained by “İntibah” turned out to be insignificant, but one of her crew members died from his wounds. The next day, the two vessels encountered each other again near Palatya (a village on the northern shore of Marmara Island). This time, the Ottoman minelayer was hit in the front superstructure, its gun was also damaged, and a fire broke out on board. However, the crew managed to master the situation quickly, preventing the ship from being eliminated from service.¹³⁴

Also on 8 December, the surfaced “E11” had to fight with an Ottoman plane which tried to hit her twice with bombs, while the submarine was on the way to the port of Bandırma. The commander of the submarine, standing on the navigation bridge of the conning tower, responded himself to the attack, firing at the enemy with a rifle. In the end, however, he decided not to tempt fate and gave the order to dive.¹³⁵ At about 8:00 a.m. the next day, when Nasmith was leaving the Bandırma area and, fortunately for him, was still at periscope depth, he saw the periscope of another submarine. He initially identified her as “E2,” which he was expecting to meet shortly in the Sea of Marmara. However, it was the German “UB14,” the recent slayer of “E20,” which saw “E11” from a long distance at 1:30 p.m. while she was already surfaced. However, Nasmith, unaware of the danger, continued his cruise on the surface, which gave him a safe speed advantage over the submerged German submarine. As a result, after some time, her commander Lieutenant Albrecht von Dewitz had to stop tracking the British vessel.¹³⁶

On 10 December, “E11” met “E2” in the Sea of Marmara and received ammunition and provisions from her.¹³⁷ Thanks to these replenishments, Nasmith was able to sink

¹³² In 1916, however, this vessel was salvaged and, after an overhaul, restored to service. Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 128–129; Ertem, *Gelibolu*, 237; *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 36; Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43.

¹³³ Displacement 82 t (full: 616 t); launched in 1886 in Glasgow as a tugboat, purchased by the Ottoman Empire in 1912 and in 1914 converted to a minelayer; machinery: 2 Rank & Blackmore 1670 hp turbines; speed: 12 kts; armament: 1 x 76 mm quick-firing gun, 2 x 47 mm quick-firing gun, 50 sea mines; crew: 12 officers and 46 seamen, Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 189.

¹³⁴ Only Rudenno (*Gelibolu*, 274) states that “İntibah” suffered any damage during her second clash with “E11.” It is indirectly confirmed by Besbelli (*Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 288), according to whom two seamen from “İntibah” were killed at that time, which clearly indicates that the ship must have been hit. Meanwhile, Langensiepen and Güleriyüz (*The Ottoman*, 43) and Ertem (*Çanakkale*, 129) claim the two sides did not score any hits during this exchange of fire.

¹³⁵ Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 274.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 274–275.

¹³⁷ Güleriyüz and Langensiepen, *Osmanlı Donanması*, 56; Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 288.

the barge "Ceylan-ı Bahri" and the tug "Memo" (GRT Unknown) two days later in the Gulf of İzmit.¹³⁸

The last event of this patrol was an attack on targets in the Istanbul area, launched on 14 December. First, "E11" caught the ship "Leros" (247 GRT), which had just arrived from the harbour in Karaköy and was landing towards the Haydarpaşa quay with the help of tugboats. The vessel, torpedoed in her bow, managed however to stay afloat, thanks to the tugboats and hastily brought barges, while the submarine, trying to make a quick retreat, hit the breakwater (also with her bow). As it turned out, the damage that "E11" suffered as a result of this collision was not serious, but the incident prompted Nasmith to go to a safer area, which at that time was the Gulf of İzmit. Heading in this direction, the submarine surfaced in the vicinity of Tuzla, where she fired her gun at the Istanbul-İzmit train. Nasmith thought he was attacking a military transport, but it was the passenger express No. 1678, reportedly carrying only civilians. One of the shells hit the train, but there is no information about possible victims of this incident.¹³⁹

On 19 December, Nasmith was ordered to return to base. Four days later, "E11" passed through the Dardanelles without any trouble and arrived at the quay in the bay of Mudros on the island of Lemnos in the early morning of December 24.¹⁴⁰

The greatest success of the submarine's third patrol was undoubtedly the sinking of the destroyer "Yarhisar." Although the overall quantity of eliminated and damaged transport and passenger ships was slightly more favourable than in the case of the second patrol, the tonnage of the definitively sunken vessels was only 4,286 GRT (not counting the tugboat, whose data we do not have), so it was as much as 60 percent worse.¹⁴¹ The lack of major successes was undoubtedly influenced by weather conditions, which at best made an effective torpedo attack difficult to be carried out, and at worst forced Nasmith to stay idle for several days. However, the British, who had been operating in the Dardanelles since the autumn of 1914, should have known that strong storms were the norm at this time of year. It was therefore necessary to consider whether planning the patrol of "E11" during this period made sense at all. It should also be noted that in November and December 1915, the Gallipoli Campaign had lost much of its intensity, mainly due to the fact that the Entente troops were already finalising their – as they thought – secret retreat from this front. Thus, the Turks no longer

¹³⁸ *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 37; Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43.

¹³⁹ Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43; Ertem, *Çanakkale*, 129; *Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları 1915*, 37. Besbelli (*Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 611) as the only one claims that the "Leros"'s tonnage was as much as 1699 GRT which seems to be a mistake.

¹⁴⁰ Langensiepen and Güleriyüz, *The Ottoman*, 43.

¹⁴¹ Nasmith, however, was convinced that he sank a total of 11 steamers, 5 large sailing ships and 30 small ones during the third patrol. (Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 276.

needed to supply their units so regularly by sea, which obviously translated not only into the tonnage of merchant ships, but also into the number and class of warships supporting combat operations in this area which “E11” could attack.

TABLE 3. Ottoman Austro-Hungarian and German vessels (except sailing ships) sunk or damaged by “E11” during her third patrol (6 November – 24 December 1915)

NAME OF THE VESSEL	CLASS	DISPLACEMENT (t)	TONNAGE (GRT)	FATE OF THE VESSEL ACCORDING TO BRITISH SOURCES		FATE OF THE VESSEL ACCORDING TO TURKISH SOURCES	
				SUNK	DAMAGED	SUNK	DAMAGED
“Arimatea” (A–H)	transport ship	–	3,891	x			x
“Lilly Rickmers” (G)	transport ship	–	4,081		x		x
“Despina”	transport ship	–	774	x		x	
“Gelibolu”	transport ship	–	284	x			x
“Edremit”	transport ship	–	414		x		x
“Yarhisar”	destroyer	284	–	x		x	
“Bosporus” (G)	transport ship	–	2,995	x		x	
“Rehber”	passenger ship	–	287	x		x	
“Eser–i Merhamet”	passenger ship	–	230	x			x
“İntibah”	minelayer	616	–		x		x
“Memo”	tug	–	N/D	x		x	
“Leros”	transport ship	–	247		x		x
IN TOTAL			at least 13,203	8	4	5	7

Note: In the table, the vessels damaged according to Turkish sources also include those salvaged and restored to service. (A–H) – a vessel flying the Austro-Hungarian flag. (G) – a vessel under the German flag. Source: compiled by the author.

The adventures of Captain Nasmith in the Dardanelles and in the Sea of Marmara could easily serve as the basis for the script of an epic film production. His example also shows that sometimes only chance decides whether one goes down in history as a war hero or as a criminal. This officer received the highest British war decoration for his first patrol – the Victoria Cross. However, if the two defective torpedoes fired by him during this mission had exploded after hitting their targets, the world would have remembered him as a villainous corsair, who, without squinting, sank a hospital ship with several hundred wounded on board, and a ferry carrying about 7,000 civilians, including women and children. Similarly, during the last patrol on 9 November, his two torpedoes missed two Bosphorus ferries, doubtlessly carrying mostly civilians, and five days later, only due to the deteriorating visibility at dusk, he did not manage

to deal with the passenger train. If they had not failed, history would have certainly remembered him for these attacks too.

The case of Nasmith likewise compels us to reflect on the unequal "weight" of the Victoria Crosses. In order to receive it, the commander of "E11" had to break through the entire length of the Dardanelles in both directions and sink (according to his own assessment) six enemy vessels (including one warship), and damage four. Six months earlier, in order to receive the same decoration, his colleague Lt. Norman Holbrook, had only needed to sail "B11" about a third of the length of the strait (and thus only half of the minefield) and sink a single battleship ("Mesudiye") which even for the Turks themselves did not present great combat value anymore, due to her age, technical condition and lack of main artillery armament.¹⁴² Another representative of the Royal Navy on the Dardanelles front, Lt. Cdr. Eric Gascoigne Robinson, was awarded the Victoria Cross for a demolition landing in the Kumkale area, during which he blew up two anti-aircraft guns and one coastal gun cal. 240 mm L/35 (at Fort Orhaniye). Although he showed unquestionable courage during this action, his achievement had no practical significance, because the gun in the fort, although loaded, had already been severely damaged before he appeared there, and a few hours earlier all the fortifications around Kumkale had been abandoned by the artillery units, for tactical reasons.¹⁴³ It is also worth noting that shortly after being recommended for the Victoria Cross, both Nasmith and Robinson carried out operations that overshadowed their previous achievements.

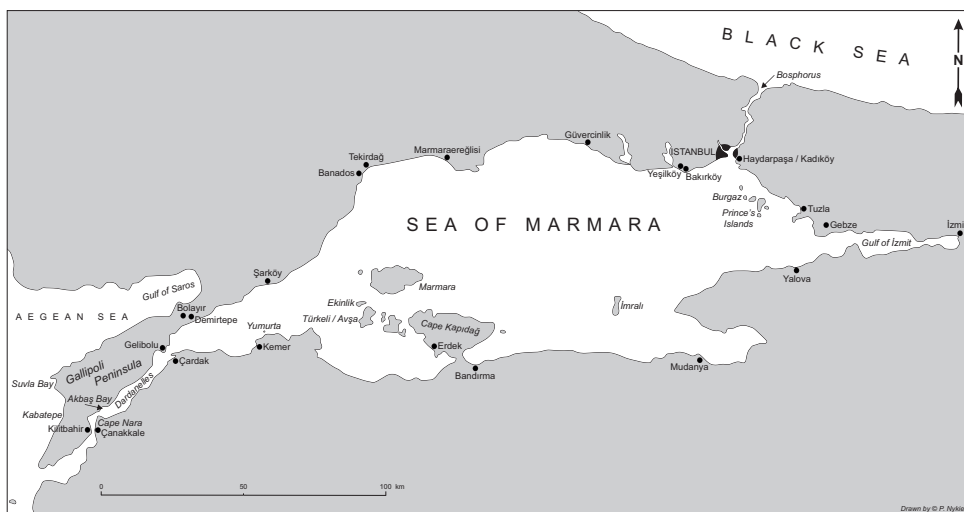
The status of Captain Martin Eric Nasmith as the most effective commander of a British submarine during WW1 is unassailable, although our knowledge of his achievements, built so far almost exclusively on the basis of his own ship log and reminiscences of "E11"'s crew, certainly needs to be clarified. This officer claimed that he had sunk at least 122 Ottoman vessels including a battleship, a torpedo cruiser, a destroyer and a torpedo gunboat.¹⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Turkish sources indicate that the total number of warships and steam-powered transport ships definitively destroyed by him did not exceed fifteen! All the rest, which during all three patrols could actually have

142 Cf.: Nykiel, *Wyprawa*, 121–127; Snelling, *VCs of the First World War*, 8–18.

143 Cf.: Nykiel, *Wyprawa*, 207–211; Snelling, *VCs of the First World War*, 19–24.

144 Rudenno, *Gelibolu*, 276. The second best British submarine commander on the Sea of Marmara Lt. Cmdr. Edward Courtney Boyle ("E14") sank a gunboat and a ferry, while a large transport ship – contrary to the statements of the western historiography – only damaged. Besbelli, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde*, 219, 279, 610. The best British submarine commander on the Baltic Sea, Lt. Cmdr. Max Horton, heavily damaged one armoured cruiser and sank a light cruiser, a destroyer and a number of merchant vessels. Ian Sumner, *British Commanders of World War II* (Oxford: Botley, 2003), 22–24; Werner Rahn, "The Naval war in the Baltic 1914–1918: A German Perspective," in: *The Danish Straits and German Naval Power 1905–1918*, ed. Michael Epkenhans, Gerhard P. Groß (Potsdam: Militärgeschichtlichen Forschungsamtes, 2010), 87.

reached approximately one hundred in total, were of various sizes, but usually small sailing ships, barges or even boats, mainly carrying food products (with a few exceptions). As it is unclear who was to be the recipient of their loads, we cannot assume that Nasmith had a significant impact on the provisions supply of the Ottoman troops fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula. However, the psychological effect of his raids on the Sea of Marmara, particularly in Istanbul, was tremendous. On the one hand, the Turks lost their sense of security in their internal waters and on the coast (including the capital); on the other hand, the raids provided a significant boost to British morale – both to civilians reading about the exploits of “E11” in their newspapers, and to soldiers themselves, especially those fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula.



Map 1. The sea of Marmara and places related to “E11”’s patrols in 1915

Source: drawn by © Piotr Nykiel.

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English version: Mark Atkinson

SUMMARY

The article is devoted to the early phase of the career of Martin Eric Nasmith (1883–1965) and is an attempt to summarise his achievements during three underwater patrols in the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmara in 1915. Those missions brought him the appellation of the most effective British submariner of WW1. In Anglophone historiography, all the books and articles related to this subject constitute a one-sided narrative based solely on British sources. Thus, the author has made the first attempt in western historiography to compare the British and Turkish points of view. Although a few such efforts have been made in Turkey, their results are not widely known to western historians, and in some cases, they raise objections. The decision to take up this challenge came from an awareness that Nasmith's view of the situation at the moment when he was personally observing the effects of his attacks could not be complete and entirely objective. He could not have known that some of the vessels he had sunk in shallow coastal waters were salvaged by the Turks and restored to service. The article gives detailed coverage of the attacks conducted by Nasmith on Ottoman warships, steam-powered merchant ships and land targets, during all three patrols of the "E11" submarine. As a result of his research, the author was able to draw attention to the fact that the results of "E11"'s second patrol were incomparably more favourable than those of the first one (for which Nasmith was awarded the Victoria Cross), both in terms of losses inflicted on the Ottoman Navy and on the transport fleet. In the case of the latter, the total tonnage of definitively sunken steam-powered vessels was more than 470 percent higher. While Nasmith claimed that he had sunk at least 122 Ottoman vessels during all

three patrols, Turkish sources indicate that the total number of warships and steam-powered transport ships definitively destroyed by him did not exceed fifteen.

Intruz w haremie, albo orientalne awantury komandora Martina Erica Nasmitha

Słowa kluczowe: Martin Eric Dunbar-Nasmith, "E11," pierwsza wojna światowa, Dardanele, Gallipoli, Morze Marmara

STRESZCZENIE

Niniejszy artykuł poświęcony jest początkowemu okresowi kariery adm. Martina Erica Dunbar-Nasmitha (1883–1965) i stanowi próbę podsumowania jego osiągnięć podczas trzech podwodnych patroli w Dardanelach i na Morzu Marmara w 1915 r. Misje te przyniosły mu miano najskuteczniejszego brytyjskiego "podwodniaka" pierwszej wojny światowej. W anglosaskiej historiografii wszystkie publikacje poświęcone działaniom Nasmitha na wodach tureckich stanowią jednostronną narrację, opartą wyłącznie na źródłach brytyjskich. Autor podjął więc pierwszą w zachodniej historiografii próbę skonfrontowania brytyjskiego i tureckiego punktu widzenia. Podobnej konfrontacji podejmowano się kilkakrotnie w Turcji, ale jej efekty nie są powszechnie znane zachodnim historykom i w kilku przypadkach budzą zastrzeżenia. Decyzja o podjęciu się niniejszego wyzwania wynika ze świadomości tego, że ocena sytuacji dokonywana przez Nasmitha, w chwili, gdy osobiście obserwował efekty swych ataków, nie mogła być pełna i całkowicie obiektywna. Nie miał prawa wiedzieć, że niektóre z zatopionych przez niego na płytkich wodach przybrzeżnych jednostek zostały przez Turków podniesione z dna i przywrócone do służby. Artykuł ten stanowi szczegółowe omówienie ataków na osmańskie okręty wojenne, statki handlowe o napędzie parowym i cele lądowe, podjętych przez Nasmitha podczas wszystkich trzech patroli okrętu podwodnego "E11." W rezultacie swoich badań autor zwraca uwagę na to, iż bilans drugiego patrolu, zarówno pod względem strat zadanych osmańskiej marynarce wojennej, jak i flocie transportowej był bez porównania lepszy niż pierwszego (za który Nasmith odznaczony został Krzyżem Wiktorii). W przypadku strat floty transportowej łączny tonaż definitywnie zatopionych jednostek o napędzie parowym był o ponad 470 procent większy. Choć Nasmith twierdził, że podczas wszystkich trzech patroli zatopił co najmniej 122 osmańskie jednostki pływające, to według źródeł tureckich liczba okrętów i parowców, które definitywnie unieszkodliwił nie przekroczyła piętnastu.

Citation

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