

Wheeler Snell

2014 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge In the evidence put before us by the ^{military} Secretary of the India Office, and also in your own statement, a prominent and important position is given to the reasons for going to Mesopotamia at all

a Yes

2015 ~~2~~ I think that it is not inaccurate to say that

a No

2016 ~~2~~ May I ask whether that was due to any difference of opinion as to sending a Mesopotamian Expedition

a No, I do not think that there was any difference of opinion at all. I think that everybody was agreed

2017 ~~2~~ Then ^{with regard to} all that comparatively lengthy ^{list} of reasons in the Military Secretary's evidence and the far from short first paragraph of your own statement, neither of ~~them~~ was due to the fact that there was any difference of opinion about the wisdom of the Expedition

a No, none whatever

2018 ~~2~~ Amongst the reasons given for going there was the necessity of maintaining the security of the oil supply

a Yes

2019 ~~2~~ The oil supply reason is of comparatively recent date, is it not

a Yes

2020 ~~2~~ All the other reasons existed before we were interested in getting oil

a Yes that is to say if the war had occurred five years earlier a great many of the reasons would still have existed

2021 ~~2~~ Except the oil

a Except the oil

2022 ~~2~~ With regard to the Chiefs, especially the Sheikh of Kuwait and the Sheikh of ^{Mohammed} ~~Mamrah~~, you said just now that we had no formal treaty with

them but that ^{there} ~~it~~ was a ~~statement formal treaty~~
~~with them but that it was a~~ document in the
 form of a letter or something of the kind in which
 the Political Officer on the spot spoke in the name
 of the British government in his assurance

22
 a Yes

2023 ^{such a} Would ~~that~~ document generally have effectively,
 if not formally, the sanctity of a treaty
 a Certainly I think it would

2024 ~~It~~ would not be a mere scrap of paper

a Oh dear no. The Sheikh of ^{Mohammerah's} ~~Mamurah~~ position and his
 prestige in that region might almost be said to have
 been based upon it

2025 ~~And~~ in addition to that it was a sort of point of
 honour for us to support these two Chiefs ^{with all}

a Yes. Our ~~faces~~ faces would have been blackened ^{by the Arabs}
 if we had left them in the lurch. The Sheikh of
^{Mohammerah} ~~Mamurah~~, although a Persian Subject, is an Arab.

2026 ~~You~~ said just now that the anticipation of ~~and~~ trouble
 amongst the Arab tribes in the part of the territory,
 in which we are in more or less effective occupation,
 had not been verified and there had not been
 much trouble with them

a No. Generally speaking, the position is as I have
 described it. Where the Turks are masters and
 hold the field the Arabs do generally adhere
 to them. Where we still hold the field the Arabs
 are generally loyal to us. The principal
 exception is the Montefik tribe on the
 Euphrates which is hostile to us. There is an
 Arab proverb that the intellect of the Arab is
 in his eyes, and where he sees that anybody is
 master he, as a rule, is loyal

2027 ~~West~~ of Nasiriyah?

2028 a League North of Nasiriyah between Nasiriyah and Kut up to the Shatt el Hai

Q On both sides of the Shatt el Hai
a Yes, on both sides of the Shatt el Hai

2029 Q At all events, if we cannot speak with great confidence about the loyalty of those tribes, their tranquillity in ^{spite} ~~respect~~ of the retirement from Ctesiphon ^{and of} the Kut garrison has remained practically undisturbed.

a Yes, generally speaking there has been no serious trouble. No doubt intrigues have been going on

2030 Q On the Persian side of the Tigris in the Karun district, has there been any trouble since General Forouge's Expedition

a No none at all

2031 Q That is for over twelve months

a Yes

2032 Q Do you suppose that that particular part of Persia was much influenced by the Russian ~~attacks~~ advance towards Teheran.

a In Arabistan probably not. They were influenced by considerations nearer home I think. They saw that the Turks were not advancing, and they saw that we were masters of the situation there. There was no threat to return towards the Karun and Ahwas, and the Sheikh of ^{Mohammerah} ~~Ahmed~~ was maintaining his position and had got a fairly firm hold, ~~I think~~. I do not think that the Russian ~~advance~~ ^{business} had much to ~~deal~~ do with that

2033 Q That is what I wanted to get at

a One cannot ^{foresee} ~~say~~ what would have happened, ^{if} there had been no Russian ^{advance} ~~attacks~~ at all, and the Turks on the other hand had advanced. Then the situation would have been very different. In that sense the

Russian advance did no doubt influence them

2034 Q The immediate cause appears to have been our successful operations in the Karun district

A Yes, the fact that we had driven the Turks out of reach

2035 Q There ~~has been~~ ^{was} a further anticipation of trouble in Afghanistan from the ~~penetration~~ ^{penetration} there of fanatical ~~Muslims~~ ^{Muslims} ~~preaching~~ ^{preaching} ~~or~~ ^{or} from German intriguers ~~going~~ ^{going} through Persia

A Yes

2036 Q Those ~~anticipations~~ ^{anticipations} have not been verified

A No, we are perhaps not quite out of the wood yet but the Amir has managed to hold his own in a way which has astonished everybody, and at present at all events the Germans and the Turks are worsted there. They are still in Afghanistan a great many of them. They are still a potential source of trouble ~~to us~~. They have not actually left the country ~~entirely~~. The Amir apparently told them that if the Turkish army of 250 000 men or whatever it was that was promised to appear in the neighbourhood of his frontier he would join them but in the meantime they ~~would~~ go away

2037 Q What is the position of the Political Agent in Mesopotamia since the army went there with regard to the general commanding - Sir Percy Cox

A His title is Chief Political Officer and he is under the orders of the General Officer Commanding and he ~~has~~ ^{is} a Staff officer in effect for political purposes

2038 Q Technically he is not supposed to have any influence on the intentions of the General Officer Commanding, or is he supposed to have any influence

A He would be his adviser. It is his duty to advise the General Officer Commanding as to the political

2039 I would be have any responsibility as to the military results of any operation that he thought politically advisable

a No

2040 I For instance, if he thought an advance on Baghdad was politically advisable and ~~was~~^{so} represented, would he be quite absolved from any responsibility for results if ~~he~~^{it} failed - the military results

a I should think entirely. The General Officer Commanding would decide what he was going to do in view of the military facts of the situation as known to him

2041 I see ~~that~~ at page 36 of the Red Book which has been already referred to, ^{that} the memorandum quoted in the first paragraph in large print was a ~~of the~~ memorandum which came from the Political Department of India

a Yes

2042 I It advocated an advance to Baghdad on general considerations which I presume were largely political considerations

a Practically entirely political considerations

2043 I It goes on " and more ~~some special acts of~~ ^{especially because of} the control which ~~the~~^{its} occupation would give us over the Baghdad Hermandshaff route - the Germans' main line of communication ^{with Persia} "

a Yes

2044 I Do not that a military consideration
a Yes, to a certain extent. ~~All~~^{What} we were concerned with ~~were~~ the political consequences in Persia of leaving that route open

2045 General Sir Neville Lyttelton: you spoke of delay between the occupation of Kut and the advance on

15/1/1916

203 fm Smell

on Bagdad Do you attribute that ~~to~~ ^{to the} delatory action on the part of the military

A Well I ^{really} do not know enough about it to know what the real facts were but General Barrow mentions in his precis that on the 12th October General Townshend with most of his Division were at Aziziyah which is only 50 miles from Bagdad The advance was authorized on the 23rd October and General Townshend united his Division, that is to say I suppose got the rest of his forces together at Aziziyah on the 15th November. That seems to me to be rather a long time. I should ~~be pleased~~ ^{have supposed} myself as they seemed ^{all to be} ~~also~~ anxious to go on to Bagdad - or General Nixon did ^{at all events} ~~to~~ they would have been making preparations for advance in anticipation

2046

Q I understood you to say ^{that} after the occupation of Kut, you think there was delay there

A I think there was delay. Perhaps we were rather a long time at home making up our minds.

Q ^{Do you think it due} It was really ~~so~~ ^{due} a long discussion between ~~London and India~~ ~~London~~

General Sir Neville Lytton. London and India

2047 Lord Hugh Cecil: This particular point was put to ~~Lord~~ ^{myself} Barrow and he pointed out that the preparations took more than a month and therefore the discussions in London made no difference

2046 Witness: If that is so that is all right, but there is nothing to show it

2048 Commander Wedgwood: The Indian Government said ^{in a telegram that it} made no difference

A In a telegram

2049 General Sir Neville Lytton: In that period of consultation he could have consolidated the military position. His whole force was not there

A No

A No. The expression which General Barrow uses is "most of his Division" It is purely a military question. I ^{perhaps} thought not to express an opinion upon it but the doubt has crossed my mind whether they were as prompt as they should have been ^{knowing} that promptitude

24
2050

Q ^{with regard to the responsibility of the} ~~There is generally a political officer, there. There was~~ in the Afghan campaign ^{the political officer had no responsi-} bility for military movements. It was left entirely to the Commander in Chief to decide whether it was possible to leave matters alone or carry them out from a military point of view however desirable it might be ^{considered politically} to ^{to garrison them out} ~~garrison them out~~ I think that that is quite clear. I did not put

2051

Q ^{part} you say the strength of the Turks was considerably underestimated. Who ^{mistakenly} ~~consulted~~ the India Office in that respect

A I can hardly say that ~~we~~ ^{we} were ~~misled~~ misled. Apparently it was General Nixon who was misled and he misled us. I suppose it was his Intelligence

2052

Q ^{that} ~~that~~ was all worked out by the military Intelligence Branch

A Yes, it was entirely military.

2053

Q It did not come your way

A I suppose ^{that} Sir Percy Cox has an Intelligence Branch too. How far they were responsible for the information put before the G. O. C. I did not know

2054

Q Was Sir Percy Cox attached to General Nixon at that time

A Yes; he accompanied the expedition when it first went to the Gulf and ^{or went} ~~was sent~~ there almost immediately after

2055

Q And was he with General Townshend too

A He was in Kut. He had a narrow escape. He was very nearly shut up in Kut; he just got out in time

2056 Q ^{time} ~~Commander~~ ^{Sir Archibald Williamson} ~~Woodward~~ At page 2 of your statement you refer to a telegram received from Sir Percy Cox. That is the telegram dated 23rd November sent by the Viceroy

A Yes

2057 Q That is a private telegram sent by the Viceroy to the Secretary of State

A Yes

2058 Q Have you access to all the private telegrams
A Only those which the Secretary of State chooses to communicate to me have been

2059 Q These seem to ~~be~~ communicated to the military Secretary and to you

A Yes

2060 Q The Military Secretary then wrote a minute ~~on it~~

A Yes, I think he did

2061 Q When did you write a minute ~~on it~~ on it.

A No, I did not write a minute ~~on it~~. I ~~am~~ think but I am not quite sure about that. I certainly noted on it certainly

2062 Q The words are "I had noted"

A Yes. I do not think I wrote a formal minute. My memory is not very clear on that, and I have not verified it. I certainly wrote nothing of any length

2063 Q Is the note a note ~~of the~~ on the margin of the telegram or what

A I have not looked recently, ^{I think it} it was just a note on a minute paper

2064 Q The conclusion you came to ~~about that~~ is important. The words you noted were "The eventual occupation of Bagdad is so desirable as to be practically essential"

2065 Q Yes, that is what I did not state any reasons leading up to that conclusion I know I was this note of yours submitted to the Secretary of State

2066 A Yes, I think that is fairly certain Q And there was nothing more than these words A Yes, that is all

2067 Q Apparently you made a further careful study of the question in the Spring of 1915 A Yes

2068 Q Have you got your conclusions A They are all on record but ^{it was not a study of} I have not studied this particular question of an advance to Bagdad. ^{It} ^{it} was a general study. It was ^{just} then beginning to be time to consider what was going to be the future of Asiatic Turkey after the War; among other questions whether it would be desirable for us to annex territory or protect territory at the head of the Persian Gulf ~~at what~~. In the course of that we had to consider if we were going to annex how much it would be necessary to annex, and it was in the course of studying that question that I came to the conclusion that Basra was untenable without Bagdad. That is to say that whatever power controls Bagdad will ultimately control Basra

2069 Q This study I suppose was made at the request of the Secretary of State

A Yes

2070 Q And submitted to him

A And submitted to him

2071 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge whatever power controlled Bagdad would control Basra; ^{you say} would that be as against a power having command of the sea

2072 Commander Wedgwood: It is really a military question

A

Witness

Yes, it is. It is all ^{intertwined} ~~interdependent~~ commercially, politically and militarily. That is the conclusion I arrived at. It was not only for military reasons. I might mention perhaps that ^{later} ~~while~~ in the year of the ^{an} Inter-Departmental Conference ^{at} which the War Office were ^{represented} sat upon the whole of this question of the future of Asiatic Turkey and in their Report they confirmed the conclusion which I had arrived at that Basra was untenable without Bagdad. It does not bear on this question really except incidentally.

2073

Lord Hugh Cecil: When did that Conference sit?

A During the Spring of last year. It reported in June or July of 1915

074

~~Commander Wedgwood~~ Sir Archibald Williamson. What Committee do you say it was?

A. An Inter-Departmental Committee - I was not on it myself. ^{The War Office the Foreign Office and the India Office were represented} General Sir Neville ^{Lyttelton} ~~Keble~~. Sir Thomas Holderness's Committee?

2075

A Sir Thomas Holderness was on it, Sir Maurice De Bunsen was Chairman. It was not considering the Mesopotamian Commission at all. The question that it was occupied ^{with} was the future of the whole of Asiatic Turkey in the negotiations which would take place at the end of the War.

2076

^{the} Chairman The Committee laid down the proposition that ^{we} you could not hold Basra without Bagdad.

2077

A Yes
Lord Hugh Cecil: That means permanently hold it

A Yes, permanently

^{the} Chairman: We ought to see that document

2078

Witness It is a Foreign Office document - ~~Commander Wedgwood~~ Sir Archibald Williamson. Then the position is this that the Secretary of State had a note from you in November, 1914, and again another studied opinion

in the Spring of 1915, strongly urging the occupation of Bagdad, and ^{there was} also the opinion of Sir Percy Cox to the same effect ^{opinion in the}

A Yes: With regard to the Spring of 1915, that as I have been saying had nothing to do with the conduct of operations at the moment. It was an opinion that whatever Power held Basra must also ~~have~~ ^{for} its own protection ^{hold} Bagdad ~~under~~ ^{or have Bagdad} ~~its influence~~ ^{within its sphere of influence}

26
2079 Lord Hugh Cecil: ~~It is said that it would mean more than this — that it would be dangerous to the British possession of Basra if Basra were~~ ^{Does it} ~~in the possession~~ ^{of Basra} ~~of some other European Power.~~ I think it means a little more than that

* It depends on how long you ^{left} leave the other Power there and how long the War ^{should} ^{might} last for instance. If we were in Basra and left the Turk in Bagdad for a year to consolidate it into a

great military ^{base} ~~place~~ my impression is that that would seriously endanger our position in Basra

x
2080 Q That was not in the mind of this Committee which was dealing with post war conditions

A No

2081 Q I do not understand you to say that they declared it to be dangerous that Bagdad should be under native control

A No

2082 Q The alternatives were British control or control by some other European Power such as Russia or Turkey

A Yes

2083 Chairman. Was that the proposition. It is no use examining without the Report

A I am afraid that the Report will not help you

F

2084

very much because it ~~is~~ only in a single paragraph refers to that proposition
 (Sir Archibald Williamson
 Commander Wedgwood) Do you agree with the paragraph in
 Sir Percy Cox's telegram on page 10, (23rd Nov-
 ember) ~~is~~ "sent by the Viceroy." After ~~earnest~~ ^{earnest} consider-
 ation of the arguments for and against I find it difficult to
 see how we can well avoid taking over Bagdad. We
 can hardly allow Jamsheidi (?) to retain possession
 and make difficulties for us at Basra; nor can we
 allow any other Power to take it; but once in occu-
 pation we must remain, for we could not possibly
 allow the Turks to return after accepting from Arabs
 co-operation afforded on the understanding that the
 Turkish régime had disappeared for good"

2085

I entirely agree with that
 I you agreed with that in November 1914, and told
 the Secretary of State so

A Yes, "Jamsheidi" is ^{nonsense} ~~unnecessary~~. It must be a telegraphic
 mistake for Turks.

2086

Q Mr ^{Marling} Marshall ^{who} I suppose is British Minister at Tehran
 telegraphed in September very strongly urging that the British
 should take Bagdad

A Yes

2087

I Was this the first time that Mr ^{Marling} Marshall had taken this
 view or put it forward

Chaplin 3 sheet 27

2088 Q I would not like to say positively but probably yes
A Was he at that time aware of the opinions entertained ^{by} the Political Officer here and by others ~~the forces~~ on that subject

A I could not say. Sir Percy Cox I believe kept him generally informed about things in Mesopotamia, but whether he ever passed on that information I do not know

2089 Q You do not know whether Mr Marling had put forward such a view before September 1915 or not

A No I do not think he had

2090 Q You said ^{that} in February 1916, that is after the retreat from ~~Ctesiphon~~ ^a Ctesiphon, the German movement in Persia collapsed owing to the success of the Russians

A Yes

2091 Q What is now the position of the German movement in Persia

A ~~Well~~ Most of the Germans have been caught and are imprisoned. Those who were in Eastern Persia and on the borders of ^{Baluchistan} ~~Baluchistan~~ had retired to ^{Kerman} ~~Kerman~~ where the acting Persian Governor summoned up courage to ~~arrest~~ ^{arrest} them. Those at Shiraz were all arrested and are still under arrest by ^{the acting} ~~the~~ Governor of ^{Shiraz} ~~Shiraz~~. Those who were at Isfahan bolted into the Baktrai country and are ~~there still~~ ^{there} or have just been turned out. Two days ago they marched on Isfahan again emboldened by the new Turkish advance in Western Persia and were defeated by the Russians. I am afraid ^{that} they have not been caught. Except for ~~that party~~ ^{that party}

2092

the Germans are practically extinct in Persia
 2 The German movement in Persia is not very important
 It is not ~~known~~ at this moment because we have never got most of them under our hands. Anything which caused the general forces of disorder to get the upper hand again and see the Germans loose would be very serious and would land us into the same mess all over again

2093

2 At the present moment are the Russians or the Turks being victorious in Persia
 It is rather difficult to say. For about a month the Turks have made no further advance. The Russians have driven them back and had themselves occupied Hamik which is rather on the frontier or rather had attacked Hamik ~~at Hamik~~ ~~unsuccessfully~~. They were then themselves driven back to ^{Hamadan} ~~Hamadan~~ and there they have been ^{sitting} ~~staying~~ opposite one another for the last month. The Turks are at ~~Hamadan~~ ^{between Hamadan and Kazvin} and the ^{Russians} ~~Turks~~ are half way and ~~at Kazvin~~ ^{at Hamadan}. The position at Teheran is a very dangerous one because if those ^{divisions} ~~divisions~~ are cleared out of the way ^{our} Legations will have to leave ^{have} ~~be~~

2094

Chamman ~~The~~ ~~affair~~ ~~is~~ ~~that~~ the Russians have been reinforced
 A They have been reinforced within the last fortnight, but they are still in ~~an~~ inferior numbers

2095

Sir Archibald Williamson ~~Commander Hodgwood~~ The Persians are giving the Russians no help
 A No but they are not making any possible ~~advances~~ ^{advances} for a short time

2096

Commander Wedgwood Are the Russians in Kerman Sah
at the present time
A The Turks

2097

Q The Turks are there again
A Yes

2098

Q We are in Kirman
A We are in Kirman

2099

Q And Shiraz
A No we are not in Shiraz, but we are on the way to Shiraz and Shiraz is in the meantime in the hands of friendly Persian officials. When I got back to the office just now I found a telegram which indicates that the situation there is rather critical. The ~~actual~~ Persian officials who are there and who we believed ~~was~~ ^{were} friendly to us, have refused to receive the Persian Governor who has been sent by the Persian Government ~~it~~ ^{which} seems to indicate considerable trouble ~~there~~

2101

Q Where is General Sykes
A Between [?] and Isfahan on the way to Shiraz via Isfahan

2102

Q Practically the position in Persia is ~~very nearly~~ ^{every bit} as bad as it was in October 1915 when you decided to go to Baghdad

A No I do not think we can say that

2103

Q In what way is it better

A It is better so far as we have since ^{all events} [^] mounted the forcibus

2104

Q Is it ~~not~~ better because you have General Sykes there

A That is a great factor

2105

Q He has done something to reorganise the Persians
A The presence of General Sykes ^{with a} ~~the~~ small force has produced a great effect. He has

not

not had time to do anything ~~else~~ yet in the way of organisation: He has been marching about

2106 Q Why was he not sent there before
A ~~It~~ It is rather difficult to answer that question

2107 Q Was it because you could not get the Indian Government to move
A It was really because the Swedish Gendarmerie held the field. We had allowed the Persian Government to create a ^{Swedish} Gendarmerie and so long as they remained effective and loyal and good, - there was no question of putting in anybody else

2108 Q Why were you content to allow the German officials and consuls to get into Persia and do nothing whatever yourselves
A We had no troops to do anything with

2109 Q Why not
A Every man was being used somewhere else that is the fundamental weakness of our position - no troops

2110 Q The Indian Government consistently said ^{that} they had no men until you ordered them to send them
A Yes but there are limits

2111 Q Would 1000 men under general Sykes be beyond the limit
A Yes I think so. His Majesty's Government once took the responsibility of ordering the Government of India to send troops, but I do not think they would ^{do so} now

2112 Q ~~But~~ Did you ever suggest that ~~we~~ ^{anything} should be done ~~in~~ Persia
A We certainly suggested to them that it was

necessary to do something on the Afghan and Baluchistan borders

2113

Q In Persia itself I mean
A That would be in Persia itself. I do not think that we ever suggested active intervention a long way away from the Indian border. We suggested sending out troops from ^{Quetta} Calcutta and that part of the world

2114

Q Why did not your Consuls do ~~more~~ ^{as well as} than the German Consuls did
A Well we have ~~done~~ ^{do not do things} in quite the same way

2115

Q But why did these Consuls simply regard themselves as people for counting mails and goods instead of fighting for their country
A I have always been told that one thing that the British consul does not do ~~was~~ is regard himself ^{simply} as a ^{man} for counting mails and goods. I think they did their best. They were far inland; they had no backing of force. We gave them ^{unlimited} money. We told them that they could spend as much money as they pleased

2116

Q ^{Did} you ~~told~~ ^{tell} them that or ^{did} the Indian Government
A We told the Indian Government to tell them

2117

Q Do you think they were told
A Yes, I think they were, but ~~the~~ ^{which} reports have not been corroborated (the question has not been gone into) suggested that at Kirman they did not spend quite as much money as they might have done; but several times we have impressed on the Government of India that anything that could be done by money was to be done by money. The weak point

in the whole thing was the absence of any backing force

2118

- 2 The Germans could not send any force to help their Consuls. They could only send money
- 1 The Germans could send money and they recruited scallywags in large numbers. We did not do that for what at the time was a good reason. We did not want to drive Persia, which was on the brink of joining the Turks and the Germans, into the arms of the Turks and the Germans and therefore it was thought advisable that our Consuls should not raise forces for the express purpose of fighting the German parties, and so create a state of affairs in which the Persians would probably say that their neutrality was violated ^{the Persian government} and then openly join the other side

2119

2 Is it your experience of the Persian Government that they yield more readily to force ^{than} to force

1 I should say that on the whole force is what is generally required to move them

2120

1 Do you not think that our Consuls might have done more in the past or the Indian Government

1 Looking back I think that we should from the first have fought the Germans with their own weapons and ^{let} made the Persian Government rip

2121

General Sir Neville Lyttelton That is to say fight the Germans with money?

1 Our Consuls might have recruited people locally who could have tackled these scoundrels

scoundrels
 2119 Commander Wedgwood
 Are the local English representatives here now
 doing their duty or not

1 We ~~should~~ have a good man at Kirman who
 will certainly do his best. He has not been
 there very long. We have no Consul at Shiraz
 at present. Colonel Gough who is reputed to
 be a very good man is on his way there
 and ^{with} the New Persian Governor general whom the
 local people refused to receive, as I have
 just mentioned. Both those men may be relied
 on to do what they can and now we have
 instead of a hostile Persian Government, a
 friendly Persian Government who would not be
 likely to be driven on into the arms of the Turks
 on any pretext that might be afforded

2123 Q Why are you doing nothing from Bushire,
 Jack or Bender ^{abbas} ~~abbas~~ is the best ^{base for} of Kirman.

A Everybody who goes up to Kirman goes there.
 You can do nothing from ^{Jack} There is no hinterland

2124 Q Are they doing nothing there

A They are recruiting locally. The advisability of
~~having~~ ^{fighting} the ferments with their own weapons was discussed
 and the reason we did not do it was

~~I think was that we did not want~~
 to ~~to~~ afford ^{Government any pretext} the Persians ~~into the arms of~~
 the Turks for throwing themselves formally
 into the arms of ^{the other} ~~either~~ side because
 that would almost certainly have meant
 that the Amir of Afghanistan would have gone
 over and we had to be very careful
 what we did

2125 Q In the Red Book I see that the Indian
 Government protested against the idea that we
 were

were only temporarily in Basra and expressed the fear that Russia might get to Baghdad before us. Was that ^{ever} in the mind of the India office. This is quite confidential

A No I do not think we ever very seriously thought of that

2126 Q The Indian Government may have been nervous about that and that may have stirred ^{them} ~~it~~ up

A No I do not think so. I think that ^{do not} ~~they~~ ^{at} ~~they~~ came to that ^{moment} ~~conclusion~~ in October 1914 there was any question of that

2127 Q In November 1914 you do not think the question of the Russians getting to Mesopotamia had arisen

A I do not think it was in ~~the~~ ^{our} minds here
2128 Q But it may have been in the minds of the Indian Government

A It may have been in the minds of the Indian Government. They are more nervous perhaps ^{about} ~~of~~ Russia than we are

2129 Q Has the Commission of Sir Maurice de ^{Bunsen} ~~Kersant~~ that we have heard of ~~has~~ settled the division of this area between the different Powers after the War

A Partly settled it. It proposed a number of alternative schemes, one of which ~~it~~ ^{it said} that it preferred

2130 Q And that settlement has to a certain extent obviated the necessity for an immediate occupation of Baghdad by us for political reasons?

A No I do not think so. ~~It~~ It depends on what you mean by "political reasons"

2131 Q I mean political reasons as between ourselves and our allies

A Well

^{Summers}
~~with~~ Sir Maurice de Lunsford's Committee had nothing to do with the question of our relations with our allies, but as a matter of fact it is the case that there is an understanding with our allies as regards that part of the world so that the occupation is not necessary to assert a claim.

31
 2132 Q There was an ~~attempt~~ attempt at some early period to establish an Arab state. Was the failure to establish that _____ because I am sorry somewhere about August of last year influential in causing you to recommend the advance to Baghdad.

2133 Q I do not think there has been any failure. Was it complete by August of last year?
 A The question of an Arab state?

2134 Q Yes, an Arab state embracing Baghdad.
 A This is another rather large question. At the time when the advance to Baghdad was decided on, there was no question of creating an Arab State.

2135 Q There was no question then.

A No.

2136 Q No question at all - not in October 1914.

A No.

2137 Commander Wedgwood Put by October 1915?

2138 Lord Stuyt Cecil I think it appears in the ^{Book} ~~Book~~

The witness The advance to Baghdad had nothing whatever to do with it. No consideration connected with the Arab state influenced me here ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ thinking about an advance to Baghdad. I remember now the passage ^{just} what you are referring to. I do not remember the answer to that particular

question was, but I can say pretty confidently

that it did not influence us at all
Commander Wedgwood

2139

Q But were not you anxious to advance to Baghdad in order to give the Arabs an excuse for rising in Mecca

A No

2140

Q The Arab rising had nothing whatever to do with the advance to Baghdad

A No ~~where I could~~ it was rather I should say the other way about that an advance to Baghdad would have hindered the Arab rising because the Arabs would have thought ^{that} we were going to take something ^{conceivably} that belonged to them ^{or} that they might ~~consequently~~ claim

2141

Q It has not been held out as a promise to ~~establish~~ ^{whatever} the gentleman ^{first} ^{is} at Mecca

A No - wait one minute, let me be quite accurate

2142

Q The possession of Baghdad has not been held out as a promise to him

A No I cannot say that it has. There is a certain understanding as regards what the Arabs claim as an Arab state, and what we are willing to recognise as an Arab state

2143

Q I do not mean that necessarily, but our advance to Baghdad was not part of a promise

A No; it was absolutely unconnected with it

2144

Q "British prestige in Persia, and indeed throughout the Middle East (and it must be remembered that our whole position was based upon nothing more tangible than prestige) probably stood at a lower ebb than at any period during the past 50 years" That is at the beginning of

of October when the advance to Baghdad was determined on

2145

Q Yes it is that your idea that British prestige in the East stands higher now after we have lost 10000 men at Kut and 20000 ^{at Gallipoli} ~~elsewhere~~
A No it stands ~~when it has been lower~~

2146

Q I should say that in Persia it may be a little better but I do not know that it ^{occurred because} our prestige has any terrible disaster ~~caused~~ our prestige to stand lower
A No

2147

Q Do you not think that prestige is rather an Indian disease.
A No I do not think it is, the alternatives are prestige and large military forces

2148

Q Is not the alternative to prestige winning the war

A Yes, but winning the war against Turkey as well as against Germany. I would like to lay great stress upon that. People have talked about this as a subsidiary theatre of operations. In a sense it is, but when Turkey entered the war the war changed its nature for us altogether. We were then fighting an Oriental Power and a Moslem Power and it has always seemed to me and to others essential that we should defeat Turkey - not a diplomatic defeat of Turkey - not a collapse of Turkey because Germany is beaten, but that we should beat Turkey in the field

2149

Q You think that our position relative to those races after the war will not depend on who

376

whether we have won the war but on whether
we have won a battle in Mesopotamia
I think that that will have a very large
influence indeed and that is the advice we
have received from various parts of the world.
The ^{Resident} question of ^{at the} Aden for example has
constantly ^{told} us ~~in~~ that ^{a withdrawal} ~~we ought to think~~ of the
Turks for diplomatic reasons because they ~~are~~
~~of their being~~ ^{are} beaten somewhere else and not
beaten by us will have no effect on the
Arabs after the war but they will snap their
fingers at us

2150 Q Do ~~the~~ ^{show} reports from India that we
have seriously suffered besides ^{suffering in self esteem} ~~in this estimate~~ by
the withdrawal from Baghdad and the withdrawal
from Gallipoli. What tangible harm has happened
to us

A Well I cannot say that anything tangible has
happened

2151 Q The mistake to prestige has not caused the
British Empire any ~~to~~ loss

A No it has not at present. ^{Only it} ~~will~~ ~~only~~
make relations much more difficult after the war

2152 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge: It has not disturbed
the tranquility of that part we still occupy

A No I do not think it has

2153 Mr Curran In your statement to me you attributed
the ^{fact} reason that our position had not changed
~~as being due~~ largely to the Russian advance

A Yes

2154 Q ^{which} She counteracted what had occurred

A I saw a note the other day by an officer on
the general staff which contained this remark -
that for the last year India has been defended

by

by Russia and roughly that is true. I took ^{the} ~~question~~ question more as referring to India rather than to the border land of Afghanistan.

Commander Wedgwood

~~I Yes to India~~

33

It there our prestige has gone down considerably

I think ^{Commander} ~~Commander~~ Wedgwood Yes to India.

2155

I ^{think} ~~think~~ ^{our} ~~our~~ prestige may have gone down but have we suffered from the loss of prestige except ⁱⁿ ~~our~~ ^{regards to} ~~our~~ own opinion of ourselves. I want to find out what we have actually lost through the loss of prestige

I cannot answer that question definitely. It is very difficult to analyse a situation & ~~imposed~~ ^{imposed} into ^{cause and effect.} ~~into~~ ^{what I want to say}

It is very difficult to put ~~it~~ ^{it} into words. Prestige in itself is valueless of course. It is the results which ^{flow} ~~follow~~ from prestige which are valuable and those results are not unfavourable to us or are not more unfavourable than they are in Persia at the present moment because the Russians have made good our defects and through Persia the influence spreads to Afghanistan and the border

2156

Lord Hugh Cecil: On the question of prestige somewhere in your statement you ~~speak of~~ ^{quote} ~~quote~~ someone as saying that the Russian defeat in Galicia affected Persian opinion. That is a quotation from Mr Marling at the top of page 3 "Russian retirement in Galicia is not without its effect at this moment". Does not that to some extent diminish the force of the information you have received that we must beat the Turks and that it is not enough to beat the Germans. If successes in Europe redact an Eastern opinion it is clear that the other statement is rather an over statement

Chaplin

Yes

A Yes. I would not like to say how permanent ~~the effect~~ ^{the effect} would be

page 5 line 1

2157 Q No, but my point is rather this: Is it not the case that ~~the~~ general success of the war ~~does~~ ⁱⁿ really require reacts or will really react even on very ignorant Orientals. They do not actually ~~and to as a~~ need to see a victory before their eyes. They know quite well who ~~is~~ ^{will win} and who ~~is not~~ ultimately

A Yes, I think there is a good deal in that but at the same time they must see something and their range of vision does not extend very far. I am not sure that it is not within the last 72 hours that I have seen a telegram from ~~Sir Percy~~ ^{Persia} in which the Minister says that the war for people there means what is happening at Kermansbah

2158 Q At the beginning of your statement you speak of a considerable ~~who would likely to be driven~~ ~~period~~ before the war during which the situation in Mesopotamia had been a ^{matter of} anxiety and consideration to the Indian Government. During that period were plans for an Expedition considered as a possibility

A No, I do not think any question of using force ever arose

2159 Q ~~Not~~ ^{I do not mean} considered as an immediate course but as something that might ultimately be done

A No

2160 Q Not even so far as going to Kurna is concerned

A No

2161 Q You spoke of ~~the~~ obligations of honour ~~of~~ ^{to} the various chiefs. That has no relevance to the advance north of Kurna

A No, none at all. We had no ~~relations~~ ^{relations} before the war ~~on~~ ^{with} any chief up there

2162 Q So far as ~~the~~ ^{the} obligation of honour goes therefore it was

was discharged by the advance to Kurma

34

A yes, provided that that was sufficient to insure the safety of these chiefs

2163

Q That is to say provided ^{that} we could stay there

A provided ^{that} we could stay there

2164

Q In respect of the oil ~~which~~ ^{it} was thought necessary or at any rate thought very desirable, to go as far as Amara but the safety of the oil was not affected or not directly affected by any advance beyond Amara.

A No, not directly but so long as the Bagdad Kermansbah ~~road~~ route was open there was always the risk of the Turks coming in and sending a force down through Laristan

2165

Q Where is that

A North of Mohammera between Mohammera and Kermansbah. Not long ago when they made their advance on Hammadan there were various reports as to what they were contemplating doing, and one of the reports was that a column was on its way to Baghgas ^{Bakharri (?) on the} ~~or the~~ direct line to the oil

2166

Q On that route, only a very small force could advance

A Only a small Turkish force could advance but the effect of a Turkish advance at all would probably be to set all the tribes up. That is always the danger

2167

Q But the tribes would be armed very imperfectly according to modern ideas

A They have pretty good arms from Muscat and the bad days of arms traffic.

They have good modern rifles

2168

Q No artillery

A No artillery

2169

Q Therefore the artillery would only be what the Turks could bring through a very difficult country

A Yes

2170 2 Beyond Amara the motives for the advance were ^{strictly} confined therefore to the question of cutting a route to Persia and the general question of prestige

A Yes. Also there is the question of the attitude of the tribes in Mesopotamia itself. It was thought ^{that} the effect of standing still might possibly, perhaps wrongly, would be ~~the~~ to turn the tribes in our rear against us ^{that} they would think we were not going on because we could not

2171 2 Is it not the fact that the reasons for going forward grow less the further you go, and the dangers of going forward grow greater the further you go

A I do not think. I ^{can} admit that the reasons for going forward grow less when one of the reasons for going forward was to cut the German communication

2172 2 That reason remains. The other reasons were ~~speci-~~ satisfied. There were four or five reasons for going to Basra, ^{and} for going to Amara one or two reasons, and for going to Bagdad there was only one reason. I will put it in this way: ^{that} all the reasons for going to Bagdad apply also for going to Basra, Kurna and Amara

A I see the point. ^{what} to a certain extent that you put to me is so. — There is one reason which I did not mention and that is connected with the question of Russia which was put to me, although there was never any talk of the Russians occupying Bagdad at the time. When the advance was decided on none of us I think could be certain what the attitude of our ^{allies} ~~members~~ was going to be with regard to the distribution of the captured territory after the war, and therefore there was some importance in being in possession

2173 2 How far do you think that weighed with the authorities at the India Office or with the Indian

Indian Government.

A I could not say.

2174

Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge. Did any ~~of the~~ ^{communications} pass on that particular subject?

A No, I do not think it was ever mentioned but it was a sort of thing that one had in one's mind
2175 ~~Commander Wedgwood~~ ^{Commodore Williamson}. It was discussed by the Secretary of State was it not. It was alluded to

A I had forgotten that

2176

2 Whether in fact any arrangement with Russia as to their taking possession or not taking possession of Bagdad

A No.

2177

2 Or retaining it if taken possession of
A There was never any question of Russia or anybody else taking possession of Bagdad. Possession is nine points of the law, and it might have turned out to be important that we should be in possession of places, the possession of which or the ultimate control of which would be important to our interests

2178

Lord Hugh Cecil. You said that the detachment ^{of the Amir's} ~~at Amara~~ ^{from} ~~being friendly~~ to Great Britain largely depended on the possibility of a Turkish Army advancing right across Persia towards Afghanistan

A That is the excuse which we are told he gave to the Germans for ~~do~~ ^{dismissing them} and for doing nothing at the moment

2179

2 Is it really, thought conceivable that a Turkish Army could have got ^{right} across Persia

A Not a large Turkish Army but a force sufficient to be described as large by the time the rumour of it reached. Calcutta. If the Turks succeeded in occupying Teheran it is thought possible that a lightly equipped small force could make a dash across.

2180 Q It is about 900 miles
 A ^{it is a good distance but} I could not say off hand how far.
 Q From the map it seems to me about 900 miles. It is a prodigious distance to send a force
 A a force of ~~cat~~ cavalry?

2182 Q Yes
 A Well that is what ^{it is thought} ~~they think~~ might be done

2183 Q We should not think ~~that~~ it possible to send a British force of ^{anything like} ~~infantry~~ that distance
 A No, ^{but} then we do not take the risks ^{that} our enemies take

2184 Q You spoke of the delay of the advance as ^a possible cause of the failure to get to Baghdad. Supposing the forces had got to Baghdad, would not the danger of the situation have been greater and not less than it actually was.
 A Yes, of course there is that.

2185 Q Supposing, they had got to Baghdad before the reinforcements arrived they might have been attacked and utterly destroyed

A Yes; they must ^{not} ~~have~~ moved so far ahead of their reinforcements no doubt. Might I be permitted to say one ^{thing} with reference to a question asked me this morning which I think I misunderstood - the question of the tenability of Basra if Baghdad is in the hands of some other Power. I am not quite sure whether in answering you ~~that~~ I did not lead the Commission to think that

2186 Lord Sir Hugh Cecil I did not include ^{Turkey} among the number of other powers
 Q you mean that ^{Basra} would not be tenable if a Turkish Army were ~~not~~ in possession of Baghdad?

2187 Chairman I understood that you meant any European Power.

A I ^{meant} ~~meant~~ to include Turkey

2188 Lord Sir Hugh Cecil: I understood you to include Turkey. In these ^{deliberations} ~~papers~~ in October 1915, you say, there was no question of a Russian advance. That is in the last

words of your Statement: "There was no reason to anticipate an advance in Persia or in the Caucasus in October". Surely that is not quite so accurate a statement is it

A I think it is. It was only at the very last moment that ~~we~~^{they} were able to scrape together enough men to send towards Teheran and to turn the scale there

2189

Q Do you mean that they did not intend to send an Expedition to Teheran until our failure before Baghdad induced them to think that the position was perilous I do not think that the dates fit for that. They were there before the battle of Shiraz Sepahan.

A Where they?

2190

Q yes

A I do not think that that is so. They were in Northern Persia; they were up at Urumia and Tabriz and in [?] but there was no question of their having a sufficient force to send down

2191

Commander Wedgwood: You say "The latter not only compelled the enemy legations to leave Teheran on the 15th November". Was General Baratoff. So that he must have been at Teheran ^{by} the 15th November

2192

Lord ~~Cecil~~ Hugh Cecil: He must have been there

A They never actually entered Teheran. Whatever they had there at the moment was a very small force which was afterwards reinforced for the purpose of their campaign southwards to Kermanshah and reinforced always under great pressure. General Baratoff had to be always begging for reinforcements

2193

2 Lord ~~Hugh Cecil~~: Were there any communications between our General Staff and the Russian General Staff in connection with this advance to Baghdad to find out what their plans were at the time

A I could not say, I do not know

was it not

2194 Q It was ~~known~~ present to the minds of those who took part in these discussions that it was a question of time, and that in a few months the situation, unless we were to be permanently defeated in the war, must certainly be ameliorated by some Russian action

2195 A The ~~the~~ position where — in Persia? ^{it not-}
Q In Mesopotamia and Persia. ~~It was~~ ^{it not-} anticipated that the pressure must be relieved by a Russian advance within a few months. Do you not think that that was present to ~~the~~ ^{your} minds?

A I do not think so. I do not think that we thought very much of the Russian capacity for making a big ^{move} ~~count~~ there at that date

2196 Q Russia was left out of consideration at that date?

2197 A Yes, I think so as far as I can remember
Lord Carlisle of Donoughmore My questions have been covered.

I have nothing to ask you

2198 General Sir Neville Lytton. At the bottom of page 9 of the Red book ^{see} "His Majesty's Government desire that no declaration of permanent annexation should be made, as it would arouse French and Russian ~~the~~ suspicions"

2199 ^{Sir Archibald Williamson} ~~Commander Wedgwood~~: What is your opinion as to why Russia went to Persia at all on this advance

A This advance was very largely to help us

2200 Q To help us

A To help themselves and to help us. It was a question of common condemnation for both of us

2201 Q Did we urge Russia to progress in Persia

A Yes certainly we did, because we realised that the only people that could do anything by force in Persia were the Russians

2202 Chairman Surely there was a delimitation of the territory in which we should exercise our respective spheres of influence in Persia

37
Chairman

A Yes.

That was in 1907. A gendarmerie was set up which practically revolted and the Russians were obliged to assert themselves
Commander Wedgwood: My point is ^{did} that we asked the Russians to make this advance

A In order to assist the common cause. If the situation ~~had~~ at Teheran was to be ~~safe~~ saved at all, it could only be by a Russian advance

2204 Q Is it understood now that if we take Baghdad Russia makes no claim to it

A There is a general understanding with Russia as to what her claims in Mesopotamia are and what ours are, and what the French ^{claims} are. No conquests will make any difference to that

2205 Q No difficulty arises upon that. ~~at all~~
A None at all

2206 Q There is no competition with regard to getting to a certain place first
A No. All that has been eliminated for a long time but at the time when the Expedition was decided on, it was not eliminated, and the question might have arisen in that form. It might have been a question of getting ~~there~~ there first

2207 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge: With regard to the necessity of going to Baghdad ~~I do not~~ assuming for a moment we grant the necessity of going to Baghdad - in order to secure Basra, in what way would the portion of Baghdad, ^{if} we had gone there, be secured unless we also went on to Mosul. Would not the probability of ~~the~~ ^{which} a European Army going to Mosul ~~it~~ would not be very far ~~far~~ at this moment to the rail head be not more ~~menacing~~ ^{menacing} to a force occupying Basra

A I do not think so. There is a ~~break~~ ^{stretch} of 11 days march between

38

H.L. (93rd Burma Infantry)

Major A Haughton, sworn and examined

337

221A
2211
Chap 2

Suchartman You have handed in this paper and it will be your ^{evidence} ~~examination~~ in chief. ~~What we~~ a certainly ^{apply to Secretary for this} witness out to know and what interests us most is

Chapter 3 Small
2212
2213

the arrangements made for the treatment of the wounded and of the sick in Mesopotamia. When did you go to Mesopotamia

I arrived on the 24th ~~September~~ ^{December} 1915

Then you were in the actions that took place for the relief of Kut

Yes I was in the Kut Relief force

^{at the} The battle of Sheik Saad there was a very long line of entrenchments

Yes - two - one on each side of the river

You were hit on the right side of the neck

Yes

Were the arrangements good or do you think them defective

I think that they were as good as the Medical people could make them, but they were inadequate

How had you been conveyed; had you come away in boats or had you marched

We went up in river steamers

I suppose you had not all your Medical equipment with you

As far as ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~equipment~~ ^{equipment} and the ^{regimental} arrangements, we had all that

Had you got ~~your~~ ambulances

There ~~were~~ ^{were} no ambulances with us; we came from Egypt and joined the Merat Division in Mesopotamia

The Merat Division were short of Medical equipment?

I could not say what field hospitals were there I was at the front the whole time and

hardly saw what was there but I was told ^{that} they were there short of their proper medical equipment when they came from France. I would not say for certain whether they were there or not because I was not ~~at~~ round there to see

2220 General Sir Neville Lytchellton Did you go from France
I No from Egypt

2221 the Chairman The Medical Officers seem to have done all ^{that} they possibly could
I Yes

2222 Q You have no complaint at all to make in that respect
I No. I think they were overworked ^{at} that part of the proceedings

2223 Q You were transferred to P.1, ^{which had been cleared} to receive the wounded I suppose it was improvised
I Yes ~~it was~~

2224 Q P stands for paddle I understand
I Yes

2225 Q ~~Chairman~~ You say that there were about 50 officers ^{had bedding on the decks but there were} from that most of them, ^{but} no cots or beds of any kind
a Yes

2226 ^{a Yes} ~~Chairman~~ Wedgwood It was the officers' own bedding was it not
I Yes

2227 ~~Chairman~~ There were about 400 or 500 patients on board the ship ~~on the two flats~~

A I cannot say that that is ^{at} all accurate; that is about what I thought there was

2228 Q ^{The next day there} It was a bitterly cold ~~day~~ wind, there was a general shortage of bed pans and bandages, and you got no food till the evening

A No. One thing I did not say ^{was that} there was only one medical officer on board the ship. I do not know whether I put that in or not

2229 Q Yes ^{was there} Only one for 400 or 500 patients 359

2230 Q ^{Yes} ~~There were~~ No awnings to keep the ~~sun~~ ^{wind or rain} off. That was on the flats. There were no awnings on the steamer

2231 Q ~~Badly~~ ^{Badly} ~~wounded~~ ^{wounded} men were lying with their regimental blankets on them soaked by the rain and there was no food until late in the day. When you got to Amara there was only one medical officer in the hospital

A Yes at ~~that~~ that hospital. There were others in Amara. There were others ~~in the~~ hospitals as well. I do not know what proportion they had in the others. This ^{hospital} ~~one~~ only had one doctor

2232 Q He had to attend to about 500
A 500 to start with I believe, and that increased to about 800. That was soon after the ^{second} medical officer came. It was increasing every day I think

2233 Q One officer died because he could not be attended to
There was a shortage of plates knives and forks
A Yes

2234 Q Were the losses very heavy
A At the battle of Sheikh Saad we lost 180 men

2235 Q Out of 720 ~~or so~~ how many
A 720 or so

2236 Q Should you say that the casualties were much heavier than had been anticipated

A As far as I can make out they did not expect any opposition at all or they expected hardly any on the march ~~up~~ until they got quite close to Kut or even then, so I should think the casualties were very much heavier than was anticipated

2237 Q Practically the preparations were quite inadequate

for the number of casualties

to you

2238

Q On the 17th April you had recovered and you came up to Beit Aressa. Is that about 8 miles from Kut ~~Beit Aressa~~

A I think it was 14 or 16 miles from Kut but I do not know the exact distance. I can find it from a map I have got

2239

Q Were there any losses on that day

A I do not think that they were very heavy. ~~The~~ ^{in the morning there} ~~was one~~ ~~morning of the battle was misty~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~morning~~ ~~there~~ ~~was~~ ~~one~~ of those splendid artillery covering fire. We ~~got into~~ ~~with~~ ~~hardly~~ ~~any~~ ~~loss~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~evening~~ ~~the~~ ~~Turks~~ ~~attacked~~. The losses in my regiment were very heavy but then we were in a very bad corner. We lost 154 men in my particular regiment out of 260

2240

Q Did the Turkish attack succeed

A No. Two regiments got short of ammunition and had to retreat. My regiment got rather caught in that way

2241

Q You were carried in a field ambulance and were then taken to a ~~field~~ ~~hospital~~ ~~on~~ ~~a~~ ~~ship~~

A Yes. By this time there were cots on board the ship and everything ^{was} ready

2242

Q So that they were better found by this time

A Yes

2243

Q There was a distinct improvement between the 7th January or when you were first wounded and on the 17th April when you were wounded ~~the~~ ~~second~~ ~~time~~. ^{twice} Were the arrangements all round better should you say

A Yes I should say so. The medical arrangements were much better all round. In the interval

field ambulances came up frequently. There were many more.

2244 Q ^{were carried} ~~you~~ ^{up} to the Rawal Pindi Hospital at Amara. Where you ~~away~~ were very comfortable

2245 Q Yes
A But there was no ice
A No

2246 Q Then you went to Basra and there so far as you could see, there was a ^{supply} of medical stores and appliances, but the ~~electric~~ ^{engine} light was not strong enough to provide electric light and ~~pull the punkahs~~

2247 Q No. The punkahs went on ~~the~~ all day and ~~directly~~ ^{the} night cause the punkahs had to stop ~~and~~ ^{when} the electric light was put on

2247 Q What sort of temperature was there
A Just over 100 I suppose or just about 100 at that time in the hospital

2248 Q Taking it all round you have not beyond the ^{of treatment} inadequacy in the first instance very much to complain of

A No nothing as far as the medical side is concerned. We were exceedingly well treated afterwards - exceedingly - everything was found in no time

2249 Q Amiral Sir Cyprian Bridge when you did get food what was it

A At the front do you mean?

2250 Q Yes
A It was bully beef

2251 Q And when you were at Basra and Amara
A We got fresh meat then

2252 Q Killed on the spot

A Yes. It must have been ~~skilled~~ ^{skilled} on the spot, ~~yes~~

2253 Q Was there no chilled ^{or frozen} meat

A I do not think so. I do not know for certain. I think the Arabs had large flocks and

and here there

2254 Q Was there any cold storage

A I do not know of any

2255 Q What did you do for vegetables

A We got potatoes I think from India, but I am not certain and there were cabbages and things like that locally grown I think

2256 Q Had you a sufficiency of vegetables while in hospital

A Yes, but at the front we frequently did not get any vegetables at all

2257 Q At the front you had only bully beef

A Yes

2258 Q Were you able to get any fresh milk

A At Amara I think we had fresh milk the second time. The first time I think it was condensed milk

2259 Q Sir Archibald Williamson there were ~~any~~ ^{no} nurses in Mesopotamia until pretty late in the day?

2260 Q The second time I went there were nurses not the first time

A ~~There were none~~ ^{There were none} where you were first wounded

A No

2260 Q When you left Mesopotamia, were there nurses at all the main hospitals

A ^{There} They were at Amara and at Basra. I believe that some were going up to the front but I had not heard of their arrival before I was hit

2261 Q The Amara ^{hospital} was an auxiliary hospital was it not

A The Rawal Pindi?

2262 Q Yes

A It came from France; I do not know what Division or what army ~~that~~ ^{it} belonged to or anything.

It is a regular Indian hospital. It came from Rawal

41/

Rawal Pindi originally. That is why it is so called

2263 Q ~~The~~ ^{were the} ~~Sisters~~ ^{sisters} nursing ~~was~~ Army Sisters
 A There were a good many of Queen Alexandra's nursing sisters and a number of Territorial Nursing sisters and others. There was ^{one} an Egyptian in private practice in ^{Egypt} ~~there~~ and there were two or three Territorials ^{that I saw} and ~~about~~ ^{and there were} three or four of Queen Alexandra's

2264 Q There were no V.A.D. untrained nurses
 A No I do not think so; I did not see

2265 Q ^{any} Ice was short
 A There was none at Amara at all

2266 Q ^{On} ~~at~~ what date
 A I arrived there on the 23rd April this year

2267 Q Was there no ice at Amara
 A No

2268 Q Was there ice at Basra
 A Yes I got there about the 24th May and there was ice there

2269 Q Did you hear anything of arrangements for making ice at Amara
 A I heard that the Government were sending out ice machines that they had ordered them but they had not arrived

2270 Q When did we first occupy Amara
 A I think that Amara was occupied ^{at the beginning} of last year, but I do not know exactly

2271 Q 18 months after we occupied it there were no ice machines

A ~~The~~ About a year after

2272 Commander Wedgwood has general impression is that it is a good thing to have Sisters in hospitals rather than ~~the~~ R.A.M.C. orderlies

to yes I think so; they are much quicker. The R.A.M.C. Orderlies are not nearly so ^{intelligent} ~~independent~~

2273

Q Every body wounded would sooner have a Sister than an R.A.M.C. orderly

A yes I think that the Indian ranks even would, but I would not like to say

2274

Q There were no Sisters on the hospital boat

A There were on the hospital ships but not on the river boat

2275

Q On the hospital ships coming from Basra

A yes

2276

Q Do you see why they should not ^{have been} ~~be~~ on the hospital ships on the river

A I do not know where they would live; the accommodation was short; there were no cabins; otherwise they would be all right

2277

Q When you ~~said~~ ^{said} of Fort Beit Aissa had you any barbed wire put in front

A

A We did not put it ~~in~~. We wanted to attack the Turks. The Turks put it up ^{but} we did not except at a very few places at the ^{strong} ~~principal~~ points

Chaplin

2 You

42

far from small

2278 Q You did not put any out to protect yourselves against night attacks
 A No. It was our ^{intention} ~~purpose~~ not to put it so that we could attack

2279 Q Had you flares
 A Yes

2280 Q Had you bombs
 A Yes, we had numerous bombs

2281 Q With regard to the food, ^{was} there any Y.M.C.A. Canteens or any other form of canteen there. ~~I think~~
 A ^{do not} ~~I think~~ there was one the first time that I went to Amara. I think there was a royal Army Temperance Association canteen

2282 Q ~~We believe~~ ^{where people could} you buy cigarettes, milk and butter
 A Yes. By the second time I came to Amara I heard that there was a Y.M.C.A. canteen.

2283 Q Did you have any complaints of troops not ^{being able} ~~being~~ sent to get cigarettes and so on
 A At the front there were complaints. ^{at} By the time I ^{left} ~~arrived~~ I do not think there were any canteens of any sort

2284 Q Not even at Amara
 A Not at the front

2285 Q What were the rations that the ordinary officer was getting? You say you had bully beef
 A We started with getting bully beef and fresh meat twice a week

2286 Q Was that when you were at Sheik Saad
 A Yes. It was nearly all bully beef at the time of Sheik Saad. We got ~~more~~ vegetables, potatoes and one other vegetable. ^{later} ^{was} on when ~~the~~ ^{more} troops came the fresh meat gradually dropped out. Vegetables were very difficult to get. Sometimes we got bully beef and nothing else

2 you

2287 Q You had no biscuits? had you any bread
 A From the 26th February to about the middle of ~~the~~
~~March~~ ^{March} we got bread

2288 Q You had field bakeries with you?

A There was a field bakery there

2289 Q ~~Did you~~ ^{Had they} come to the ^{conclusion} that bully beef was the only
 form of meat possible in the tropics or had they con-
 sidered knocking part of it off and replacing
 it with anything else

A The doctors were going round and asking questions
 about it at one part of the proceedings. There were
 large flocks and herds that the
 Arabs had. They were nearly all goats and sheep
 I think

2290 M^r John Hodge: In your statement Major, you say ^{that} one
 officer ^{died} ~~made~~ because he could not be attended to
 in time

A Yes

2291 Q If that ^{was the} case with the officers, I presume
 that it would be much worse for the rank
 and file

A I do not know. ~~You see~~ ^{saw} I was ^{on} the rank
 and file there, but I could not give you any
 definite information on that point

2292 Q But naturally the officers would ~~first~~ be looked
 after first

A Well it depends on how you are brought in to a
 great extent. The doctors attend to them as they
 come in generally. Afterward when things have
 settled down they may get better treatment

2293 Q Lower down you say with respect to the natives
 reveals that they had plank beds to lie upon
 Was this due to inefficiency of transport. Bengal
 A The hospital that I referred to was the ~~Bengal~~ ^{Bengal}
~~Stationary~~ ^{Stationary} hospital. That hospital was sent out
 either

43
 either very early in the war or before the war. It was
 a sort of mission hospital.

2294 Q Of John Hodge: up to the time you were wounded on the
 second occasion had you full rations all the time

A For a good part of the time we did not have vegetables
 and sometimes sugar and tea, and ^{other} things like that
 fell off a bit for short periods

2295 Q Had you always full rations ^{of} bread

A No. We got bread for about a fortnight I think ~~it~~
~~was~~ fairly regularly and after that we did not get
 any at all

2296 Q Were you reduced to half rations at any time in
 during your experience

A You are never told that you are on half rations

2297 Q You were never told, but you did ^{you} not get enough
 to eat

A I had enough to eat. I have no ^{complaint} objections with re-
 gard to that

2298 Q Could you say the same for the men under your
 command

A I think that the men came off rather better than
 we did. They had rice and flour which was quite
 sufficient. Extra rations which they rather wanted
 such as milk and so on, they ^{did} could not get
 and could not buy it, but afterwards the doctors
 recommended it and they got extra milk I think
 about once or twice a week

2299 Q Lord Hugh Cecil. I gather ^{that} your evidence is to the effect
 that there was considerable improvement between
 the month of January and the month of April

A Yes

2300 Q Would you mention in what respects

A The accommodation was better; there were nurses
 there; there were appliances galore or there seemed to
 be

be the second time I was there. There were more ~~there~~ ^{there were more} ~~there~~ ^{there were more} people to attend to you ~~the~~ R. A. M. C. fellows
~~there were more~~ ^{orderlies} They had got hold of men and trained them and they did pretty

2301 Q Well there was more medical personnel and ^{there were} more appliances

A Yes

2302 Q Did you observe any shortage of field ambulances

A The first time so far as I could see on the left bank of the river there were two field ambulances. — I do not know how many there were on the other.

2303 Q On the left side of the river we had a brigade of one regiment and some artillery

Q What number of field ambulances ought there to have been instead of two if they had been up to strength

A I do not know what the scale laid down is. There was a good deal of cavalry on the right bank

2304 Q There should have been a great many more than two?

A I think on the Indian scale there would not have been many more than two. The Indian scale seems to be a bit small for the casualties we get now-a-days. It is calculated on North West frontier fighting where the casualties are not so great

2305 Q It was not modified.

A In the particular case of the Relief of Kut they modified it as far as they could, but they had not much time

2306 Q You are speaking of April?

A ~~At~~ By April there were very many more field ambulances

2307 Q Did you see anything of transport of wounded in carts

A No not the first time. The second time I was ~~was~~ wounded there were ambulances with ^{places} ~~not~~ that could

could put stretchers in ~~at the principal points~~. The first time, I did not see it myself, but I was told that they were carried in ^{ordinary} ~~small~~ mule carts
small carts

2308 Q When you were on the boats there was nothing positively insanitary. There was considerable discomfort the first time

A No, nothing absolutely insanitary. It was very cold and uncomfortable

2309 Q There were insanitary conditions on some ^{of the} boats on the river I gather

A Yes, but I did not hear much about that kind of thing at that time

2300 Q Earl of Donoughmore. Where is Orak where you were

A That is as far as the advance went right up the Tigris

2311 Q Close to Sheik Saad?

A 12 miles up ^{on the second} the river from Sheik Saad.

2312 Q You were fortunate ^{on the second} occasion when you were wounded ^{in being} you were brought down in an actual hospital ship the whole way from Orak to Amara

A Yes

2313

Q I value you say that it took you two days to get down and ^{it} probably took longer to get up on the return journey

A Yes ~~I did~~

Chapter 3
Sordell

2314

Q Am I right in ^{thinking} saying that it was one of the very few if not the only hospital ship there. It was not one of a fleet of hospital ships was it.

A I do not know the exact number, but I believe ~~it was~~ ^{they had} two at the time we left specially for hospital

2315

Q Do you remember the name of your hospital ship on ~~the~~ moving from Oran to Awara. Look at paragraph 11 of your statement. There is ~~another~~ ^{no} mention of the name

2316

A I do not remember the name. Lord Hugh Cecil was at the Sekkimi.

A No; it was the P something or other. ~~I do not remember the name~~

2317

Chairman Thank you

(The witness withdrew)

Chapter

Lieutenant. Colonel Blois-Johnson,

Called and Examined.

Chairman (Earl of Dorroughmore): You have been good enough to put in a statement which I take it we may treat as your evidence in chief, and we have your answers to the questions which were submitted to you, which we will also embody in our proceedings.
A Certainly

[Apply to Secretary for this]

Folder T. O. from Mill.

2319 Q You went as one of the very earliest to Mesopotamia: you started from Karachi.
A Yes, on the 20th November, 1914.

2320 Q In a troopship, the "Baroda" which you condemned.

A I thought that the accommodation was not sufficient

2321 Q It was so badly arranged that ^{accommodation} provision was given to mules that ^{might} should have been given to human beings.

A Yes.

2322 Q You formally registered a complaint when you arrived at Basra.

A Yes.

2323 Q You took part in the fighting in January.
A January 17th, I think.

2324 Q And again in May and again in September.
In January you took part in the reconnaissance in force from ~~Masra~~ Mezera.

A Yes.

2325 Q You were not very well impressed with the arrangements for the wounded.

A No. There was a reconnaissance in force. The total number of casualties that day was 60. My regiment was covering ~~the~~ ^{the} retirement of the force and I was behind. The remainder of the force except my regiment and the 119th had all gone back to Kurma and Mezera, and I thought that there ought to have been ambulances there to take the wounded back.

2326 Q Was it the kind of country where they could have been used.

A Yes; it was quite level.

2327 I And not heavy mud.

A No; it was country where ambulances could have come; it was perfectly dry. I could not positively say that there were not any; there might have been some.

2328 Q You saw none.

A I saw none.

2329 Q You are aware of none.

A No.

2330 Q The cases had to be carried for a distance of six miles on stretchers?

A Yes. I am not sure about six miles. It is six miles to Kurma and about five miles to Mezera, I should say. Mezera is on the left bank and Kurma is on the right bank.

2331 Q You took part in May in the defence of Kurma.

A Yes.

Q That was the main advance under General Townshend.

A Yes.

Q You

Q You thought that the wounded were well looked after then.

A Yes. We put the wounded in boats when we came to the bank, and they went down to Kurna.

2333 Q Were they boats specially fitted for the purpose, or were they the same boats that you used for the advance.

A The same boats. It was a short distance.

2334 Q There were not many casualties that day, were there.

A Not that day.

2335 General Sir Neville Lyttelton: There were 25 casualties that day.

2336 Chairman: After the arrival at Amara you noticed a deficiency of certain drugs—quinine, for instance.

A Yes. I was asked to supply quinine to another regiment, which I thought rather extraordinary.

2337 Commander Wedgwood: From your medical pannier ~~or~~ from your private regimental supply.

A Yes.

2338 Chairman: On inquiry at the Military Store Depot it was found that they were deficient of a certain number of stores, I understand.

A Yes, but what stores I do not know.

The man whom I saw was an Assistant Surgeon, I ~~thought~~ ^{think}, and he told me that there were certain things short.

2339 Q You know that there was no ice, and milk was deficient.

A ~~There was no ice and milk~~ I do not know it

it, but I heard that there was no ice.

2340

Q Milk was deficient, and you made special arrangements for a supply.

A Yes: I got milk for my men on my own account.

2341

Q You were engaged in the September fighting in the attack on the Es-Sinn position.

A Yes.

2342

Q You cover your experience there in the answers to the questions sent to you. The steamer that you were brought down in was not fitted as a hospital ship. There was no operating theatre, and cots and sweepers were insufficient.

A I brought my own sweeper myself. I got one from the regiment, and I sent him back when I got to Basra. I thought that there might be a deficiency of sweepers.

2343

Q Does a deficiency of sweepers mean a lack of cleanliness on the ship.

A A lack of sweepers means discomfort to the men.

2344

Lord Hugh Cecil: Not positively ins sanitary conditions.

A No, not necessarily. I very often heard the men shouting for sweepers, and I think that there were two - not more I should say, but I could not say for certain.

~~However~~, I brought ^{my own} sweepers down. We got one from my regiment.

2345

Q The steamer was not fitted as a hospital ship, and was short of certain medical conveniences. You say that a Sepoy had to have his leg set without an anesthetic.

A Yes

Q There

41

2346

Q There was no operating theatre.

A I do not know what was being done, but I presume that it was something like that. The ship was not a hospital ship.

2347

Q She was not there ^{immediately} when she was wanted. You were kept waiting for some days.

A Yes. I went up to Kut myself.

2348

Q And others were kept waiting.

A Yes. The battle was on the 28th September and the boat that I transhipped into at Kut picked up the wounded, I think, from the battle of the 28th, on the evening of the 1st. I think that is when they came on board, and she left on the 2nd.

2349

Q As far as you know, was this the first picking up of those who were picked up after that battle. Had any steamer gone down before and taken an earlier lot on board.

A As far as I could learn the wounded from the first phase of the battle were taken to the bank of the ~~river~~ river about five miles lower down and I think that the majority came down after we did, but I could not say. I think that there were wounded on the bank as we passed, but I was lying down on the deck, and I could not see much.

2350

Q Were you badly hurt.

A I had a bad wound on my knee.

2351

Commander Wedgwood: Had you mosquito nets for the white troops, for the officers, or for the coloured troops.

A Do you mean on the ship?

- 2352 Q No, on the shore.
A Yes, I think so, but I do not ~~know~~ ^{know} whether they were taken up
- 2353 Q Did you use yours.
A No.
- 2354 Q At no time while you were there was it necessary?
A No.
- 2355 Q Do you say that they were not wanted.
A Are you talking about the month of September?
- 2356 Q Yes.
A No; I do not think they were wanted.
- 2357 Q Not subsequently until you got to April, I suppose, for flies.
A There are no mosquitoes to heart in the cold weather.
- 2358 Q Do you require nets to keep off flies in order to get to sleep.
A Not at night.
- 2359 Q You have never heard of people having to sweep the flies off their faces.
A Not at night.
- 2360 Q Had you spine pads.
A All the British troops had spine pads.
- 2361 Q Quinine was short, as I understand.
A I presume so, because the Officer Commanding ^{another} ~~the~~ Regiment applied to me for quinine.
- 2362 Q Were you inoculated.
A Yes.
- 363 Q Were all the white men, and the coloured troops as well, inoculated.
A Yes.
- 2364 Q For enteric.
A Yes.

- 2365 Q Not for cholera, I suppose.
A Not for cholera.
- 2366 Q Could the men get cigarettes while you were there; was there any sort of canteen or Y. M. C. A. tent or anything of the kind.
A Do you mean ~~down~~ during the whole of the time that I was out there?²
- 2367 Q Yes.
A Yes, they could.
- 2368 Q At Basra.
A They could get them all the way up, at Mezera, Kurna and Ali Gherba.
- 2369 Q From the A.S.C.
A No, from private traders in the villages.
- 2370 Q Did you get an issue of tobacco for the men.
A No, not for the men. We got no Government issue of tobacco; we got gifts from India.
- 2371 Q We had Government issues in Gallipoli.
A We had not.
- 2372 Q You were with native troops.
A Yes.
- 2373 Q Did you get jam for the officers.
A Yes.
- 2374 Q All the time that you were there.
A Yes.
- 2375 Q Were the rations all right.
A Yes.
- 2376 Q Did you get vegetables? Did you get dried vegetables.
A Yes.
- 2377 Q Potatoes.
A Yes, preserved potatoes.

- 2378 Q Did you find the bully \neq beef uneatable.
or were you always on fresh meat.
A You are talking of the Officers' Mess?
- 2379 Q Yes
A The bully beef was all right.
- 2380 Q Sir Archibald Williamson: When you were in
hospital in Mesopotamia, wounded, where
were any nurses.
A I had been at Basra about a fortnight,
I think, when the first batch of nurses
came out — four.
- 2381 Q What date was that.
A That, I should say, was about the 15th
October.
- 2382 Q 1915.
A 1915.
- 2383 Q Were those the first nurses that arrived
in Mesopotamia.
A I should say that the four were the first
lot.
- 2384 Q Was there a supply of ice on the steamers.
A What steamers do you mean?
- 2385 Q The steamers that came down with the wounded.
A Oh, dear no.
- 2386 Q When you were in hospital at Basra was
there ice.
A Yes, there was ice at Basra, or I
think so. It was not a bit hot then.
- 2387 Q I was just going to ask that, Is it the
case that part of the year the temperature
~~was~~ such that you do not require ice.
A Yes.
- 2388 Q For how many months would it be so
cool that you would not require ice.

A: I

A I could not tell you accurately, but I should think that for four months of the year you do not require ice.

2389 I And for eight months you do require ice.
A Yes - We never had ice, but at the hospital I dare say they had ice.

2390 Chairman: The troops never had ice.
A No, and we never had ice in our Officers' Mess.

2391 Sir Archibald Williamson: You do not know whether there was ice or not when you were in hospital at Basra.

A I do ~~do~~ ^{should} think there was ice.

2392 I You should think so.
A Yes. It was procurable I should think, but I heard that there was no ice in Amara, and it was excessively hot there. There were a good many deaths, I think, from heat.

2393 I You were there in September, 1915.

A I was in Amara in June, 1915.

2394 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge: I see that you had the foresight to take with you from Kuwait a supply of quinine, as a precautionary measure, to give to your ^{own} men.

A Yes: I had a prophylactic issue for my men, and I took that with me.

2395 I I infer from that - tell me if I am wrong - that there was no want of quinine at Kuwait if people had only taken it up with them. I am referring to the hospital ships and the ambulances.

A This was my own supply that I applied for myself. I got a great big box full of

2396 of Tabloids - my own regimental issue.
 Q Where did you get it.
 A at Kurma.

2397 Q When you were getting it, you ~~had~~ ^{did} not
 gathered that there was very little to spare.
 A No; they issued it to me when I applied
 for it.

2398 Q I see that you also obtained permission
 to purchase cows to supply the men of
 your regiment with milk.

A Yes, I had about 60 men sick then,
 and I got permission from the Political
 Officer there to buy cows. I bought a
 certain number of cows. The Political Officer
 was going to pay for them. I did not
 pay for them. I got permission to get
 them and I got them.

2399 Q There were very few cows about, I
 suppose. Was it difficult to get cows.

A I did not find any difficulty.

2400 Chairman: You just bought them in the
 villages.

A Yes; I sent my men out to get them and
 they got them. I got permission from
 the Political Officer to buy cows in the
 villages, and so I sent out and got them.

2401 General Sir Neville Lyttelton: Was yours a
 regiment of Sikhs or of Mohammedans.

A ~~Yes~~, Half and half: four Companies of
 Sikhs and four of Mohammedans.

2402 Q ~~Punjabis~~. Punjabis.

A Yes.

2403 Q It always has been, has it not.

A Yes

(The witness withdrew).

(Adjourned to Tuesday next at 11 o'clock).