



"Queen" (Flagship)

"Gascon"

"London"

"Majestic"

"Goeben" opens fire—off Anzac—25th April, 1915—Transports shelled out of anchorage

(Reproduced from the author's "On the Spot" sketchbook.)

CAPTAIN G. H. GRIGGS (*Retired*)

recalls . . .

the "GASCON" at ANZAC

THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND the twenty-fifth of April is kept as a Public Holiday (Anzac Day) to commemorate the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps at Gallipoli in the First World War.

This is the fiftieth Anniversary and I recall that memorable day and the months that followed as clearly as if it had all happened yesterday.

Early in 1915 I was appointed Fourth Officer of the Hospital Ship *Gascon* (Capt. W. F. Stanley) and we sailed with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force for the island of Lemnos which is situated some sixty miles south-west of the entrance of the Dardanelles . . .

The night of 24th April was calm, clear and moonlit and shortly before sunset we left the wonderful natural harbour of Mudros (which made an ideal base for operations) bound for the shores of Gallipoli. It was a huge armada consisting of every type of vessel imaginable—battleships, cruisers, destroyers, troopships, storeships, trawlers, tugs and innumerable lighters and small craft—most of the warships and troopships with a string of these latter in tow.

We steamed dead slow and soon after midnight the moon set and we were about ten miles from our objective. We crept slowly in towards the shore and arrived off Anzac about two hours before dawn. No anchors were dropped and in complete silence and pitch darkness the troops were transferred to lifeboats and small craft and towed in towards the beach we could not yet see. No signs from the Turks that our presence had been discovered, and the atmosphere became tense as dawn broke and the outline of the enemy coast became dimly visible. First the heights of Sari Bair Ridge, which dropped almost sheer some nine hundred feet to the narrow strip of beach towards which we could now see the boats making with utmost speed.